THE NATIONS OF TO-DAY

A New History of the World

EDITED BY JOHN BUCHAN

INDIA

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THE NATIONS OF TO-DAY

A New History of the World

INDIA

BY

SIR VERNEY LOVETT

K.C.S.I., M.A.

WITH A SECTION ON ECONOMICS BASED ON A CONTRIBUTION BY THE LATE SIR W. MEYER, G.C.I.E., K.C.S.I.

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GENERAL INTRODUCTION

This series has been undertaken to provide for the ordinary citizen a popular account of the history of his own and other nations, a chronicle of those movements of the past of which the effect is not yet exhausted, and which are still potent for the peace and comfort of the present. The writers conceive history as a living thing of the most urgent consequence to the men of to-day; they regard the world around us as an organic growth dependent upon a long historic ancestry. The modern view of history—apart from the pedantry of certain specialists—is a large view, subordinating the mere vicissitudes of dynasties and parliaments to those more fateful events which are the true milestones of civilisation. Clio has become an active goddess and her eyes range far. History is, of course, like all sciences, the quest for a particular kind of truth, but that word "truth" has been given a generous interpretation. The older type of historian was apt to interest himself chiefly in the doings of kings and statesmen, the campaigns of generals and the contests of parties. These no doubt are important, but they are not the whole, and to insist upon them to the exclusion of all else is to make the past an unfeatured wilderness, where the only personalities are generals on horseback, judges in ermine and monarchs in purple. Nowadays, whatever we may lack in art, we have gained in science. The plain man has come to his own, and, as Lord Acton has put it, "The true historian must now take his meals in the kitchen."

The War brought the meaning of history home to the world. Events which befell long ago suddenly became disruptive forces to shatter a man's ease, and he realised that what had seemed only a phrase in the textbooks might be a thing to die for. The Armistice left an infinity of problems, no one of which could be settled without tracing its roots into the past. Both time and space seemed to have "closed up." Whether we like it or not, our isolation is shattered, and not the remotest nation can now draw in its skirts from its neighbours. The consequence must be that even those who are averse to science, and prefer to settle everything by rule of thumb, will be forced

to reconsider their views. Foreign politics have become again, as they were in the age of Pitt and Castlereagh, of Palmerston and Disraeli, urgent matters for every electorate. The average citizen recognises that the popular neglect of the subject contributed in no small degree to the War, and that problems in foreign affairs are as vital to him as questions of tariff and income tax. Once it used to be believed that a country might be rich while its neighbours were poor; now even the dullest is aware that economically the whole world is tightly bound together, and that the poverty of a part lessens the prosperity of the whole. A merchant finds his profits shrinking because of the rate of exchange in a land which was his chief market; he finds his necessary raw material costly and scarce because of the dislocation of industry in some far-away country. He recognises that no nation is commercially sufficient to itself, and he finds himself crippled, not by the success, but by the failure of his foreign colleagues. It is the same in other matters than commerce. Peace is every man's chief interest, but a partial peace is impossible. The world is so closely linked that one recalcitrant unit may penalise all the others.

In these circumstances it is inevitable that interest in foreign countries, often an unwilling and angry interest, should be compulsory for large classes which up to now have scarcely given the matter a thought. An understanding of foreign conditions—though at first it may not be a very sympathetic understanding—is forced upon us by the needs of our daily life. This understanding, if it is to be of the slightest value, must be based upon some knowledge of history, and Clio will be compelled to descend from the schools to the market-place. Of all the movements of the day none is more hopeful than the spread through all classes of a real, though often incoherent, desire for education. Partly it is a fruit of the War. Men realise that battles were not won by muddling through; that as long as we muddled we stuck fast, and that when we won it was because we used our brains to better purpose than our opponents. Partly it is the consequence of the long movement towards self-conscious citizenship, which some call democracy. Most thinking people to-day believe that knowledge spread in the widest commonalty is the only cure for many ills. They believe that education in the most real sense does not stop with school or college; indeed, that true education may only begin when the orthodox curriculum is finished. They believe, further, that this fuller training comes by a man's own efforts and is not necessarily dependent

upon certain advantages in his early years. Finally, they are assured that true education cannot be merely technical or professional instruction; that it must deal in the larger sense with what are called the "humanities." If this diagnosis is correct, then the study of history must play a major part in the equipment of the citizen of the future.

I propose in these few pages to suggest certain reasons why the cultivation of the historical sense is of special value at this moment. The utilitarian arguments are obvious enough, but I would add to them certain considerations of another kind.

Man, as we know, is long-descended, and so are human society and the State. That society is a complex thing, the result of a slow organic growth and no mere artificial machine. In a living thing such as the State growth must be continuous, like the growth of a plant. Every gardener knows that in the tending of plants you cannot make violent changes, that you cannot transplant a well-grown tree at your pleasure from a wooded valley to the bare summit of a hill, that you cannot teach rhododendrons to love lime, or grow plants which need sun and dry soil in a shady bog. A new machine-made thing is simple, but the organic is always subtle and complex. Now, half the mischiefs in politics come from a foolish simplification. Take two familiar conceptions, the "political man" and the "economic man." Those who regard the citizen purely as a political animal, divorce him from all other aspects, moral and spiritual, in framing their theory of the State. In the same way the "economic man" is isolated from all other relations, and, if he is allowed to escape from the cage of economic science into political theory, will work havoc in that delicate sphere. Both are false conceptions, if our problem is to find out the best way to make actual human beings live together in happiness and prosperity. Neither, as a matter of fact, ever existed or could exist, and any polity based upon either would have the harshness and rigidity and weakness of a machine.

We have seen two creeds grow up rooted in these abstractions, and the error of both lies in the fact that they are utterly unhistorical, that they have been framed without any sense of the continuity of history. In what we call Prussianism a citizen was regarded as a cog in a vast machine called the State, to which he surrendered his liberty of judgment and his standard of morals. He had no rights against it and no personality distinct from it. The machine admitted no ethical principles which might interfere with its success, and the

citizen, whatever his private virtues, was compelled to conform to this inverted anarchy. Moreover, the directors of the machine regarded the world as if it were a smooth, flat high-road. If there were hollows and hills created by time, they must be flattened out to make the progress of the machine smoother and swifter. The past had no meaning ; all problems were considered on the supposition that human nature was like a mathematical quantity, and that solutions could be obtained by an austere mathematical process. The result was tyranny, a highly efficient tyranny, which nevertheless was bound to break its head upon the complexities of human nature. Such was Prussianism, against which we fought for four years, and which for the time is out of fashion. Bolshevism, to use the convenient word, started with exactly the same view. It believed that you could wipe the slate quite clean and write on it what you pleased, that you could build a new world with human beings as if they were little square blocks in a child's box of bricks. Karl Marx, from whom it derived much of its dogma, interpreted history as only the result of economic forces ; he isolated the economic aspect of man from every other aspect and desired to re-create society on a purely economic basis. Bolshevism, though it wandered very far from Marx's doctrine, had a similar point of view. It sought with one sweep of the sponge to blot out all past history, and imagined that it could build its castles of bricks without troubling about foundations. It also was a tyranny, the worse tyranny of the two, perhaps, because it was the stupider. It has had its triumphs and its failures, and would now appear to be declining ; but it, or something of the sort, will come again, since it represents the eternal instinct of theorists who disregard history, and who would mechanise and unduly simplify human life.

There will always be much rootless stuff in the world. In almost every age the creed which lies at the back of Bolshevism and Prussianism is preached in some form or other. The revolutionary and the reactionary are alike devotees of the mechanical. The safeguard against experiments which can only end in chaos is the wide diffusion of the historical sense, and the recognition that "counsels to which Time hath not been called, Time will not ratify."

The second reason is that a sense of history is a safeguard against another form of abstraction. Ever since the War the world has indulged in a debauch of theorising, and the consequence has been an orgy of catchwords and formulas, which,

unless they are critically examined, are bound to turn political discussion into a desert. The weakening of the substance of many accepted creeds seems to have disposed men to cling more feverishly to their shibboleths. Take any of our contemporary phrases—"self-determination," "liberty," "the right to work," "the right to maintenance," "the proletariat," "class consciousness," "international solidarity," and so forth. They all have a kind of dim meaning, but as they are currently used they have many very different meanings, and these meanings are often contradictory. I think it was Lord Acton who once said he had counted two hundred definitions of "liberty." Abraham Lincoln's words are worth remembering: "The world has never yet had a good definition of the word 'liberty,' and the American people just now are much in want of one. We are all declaring for liberty; but in using the same word we do not all mean the same thing. We assume the word 'liberty' to mean that each worker can do as he pleases with himself and the product of his labour, while, on the other hand, it may mean that some man can do as he pleases with other men and the product of other men's labour." Are we not in the same difficulty to-day? Perhaps the worst sinner in this respect is the word "democracy." As commonly used, it has a dozen quite distinct meanings, when it has any meaning at all, and we are all familiar in political discussions with the circular argument—that such and such a measure is good for the people because it is democratic; and if it be asked why it is democratic, the answer is "Because it is good for the people." "Democratic" really describes that form of government in which the policy of the State is determined and its business conducted by the will of the majority of its citizens, expressed through some regular channel. It is a word which denotes machinery, not purpose. "Popular," often used as an equivalent, means merely that the bulk of the people approve of a particular mode of government. "Liberal," the other assumed equivalent, implies those notions of freedom, toleration and pacific progress which lie at the roots of Western civilisation. The words are clearly not interchangeable. A policy or a government may be popular without being liberal or democratic; there have been highly popular tyrannies; the German policy of 1914 was popular, but it was not liberal, nor was Germany a democracy. America is a democracy, but it is not always liberal; the French Republic has at various times in its history been both liberal and democratic without being popular. Accurately employed, "democratic" describes a

particular method, "popular" an historical fact, "liberal" a quality and an ideal. The study of history will make us chary about the loud, vague use of formulas. It will make us anxious to see catchwords in their historical relations, and will help us to realise the maleficent effect of phrases which have a fine rhetorical appeal, but very little concrete meaning. If political science is to be anything but a vicious form of casuistry it is very necessary to give its terms an exact interpretation, for their slipshod use will tend to create false oppositions and conceal fundamental agreements, and thereby waste the energy of mankind in empty disputation.

The third reason for the study of history is that it enables a man to take a balanced view of current problems, for a memory stored with historical parallels is the best preventive both against panic and over-confidence. Such a view does not imply the hard-and-fast deduction of so-called laws, which was a habit of many of the historians of the nineteenth century. Exact parallels with the past are hard to find, and nothing is easier than to draw false conclusions. A facile philosophy of history is, as Stubbs once said, "in nine cases out of ten a generalisation founded rather on the ignorance of points in which particulars differ, than in any strong grasp of one in which they agree." Precedents from the past have often been used with disastrous results. In our own Civil War the dubious behaviour of the Israelites on various occasions was made an argument for countless blunders and tyrannies. In the same way the French Revolution has been used as a kind of arsenal for bogus parallels, both by revolutionaries and conservatives, and the most innocent reformers have been identified with Robespierre and St. Just. During the Great War the air was thick with these false precedents. In the Gallipoli Expedition, for example, it was possible to draw an ingenious parallel between that affair and the Athenian Expedition to Syracuse, and much needless depression was the consequence. At the outbreak of the Russian Revolution there were many who saw in it an exact equivalent to the Revolution of 1788 and imagined that the new Russian revolutionary armies would be as invincible as those which repelled the invaders of France. There have been eminent teachers in recent years whose mind has been so obsessed with certain superficial resemblances between the third century of the Christian era and our own times that they have prophesied an impending twilight of civilisation. Those of us who have been engaged in arguing the

case for the League of Nations are confronted by its opponents with a dozen inaccurate parallels from history, and the famous plea of the "thin edge of the wedge" is usually based upon a mistaken use of the same armoury.

A wise man will be chary of drawing dapper parallels and interpreting an historical lesson too rigidly. At the same time there are certain general deductions which are sound and helpful. For example, we all talk too glibly of revolution, and many imagine that, whether they like it or not, a clean cut can be made, and the course of national life turned suddenly and violently in a different direction. But history gives no warrant for such a view. There have been many thousands of revolutions since the world began; nearly all have been the work of minorities, often small minorities; and nearly all, after a shorter or longer period of success, have utterly failed. The French Revolution altered the face of the world, but only when it had ceased to be a revolution, and had developed into an absolute monarchy. So with the various outbreaks of 1848. So conspicuously with the Russian Revolution of to-day, which has developed principles the exact opposite of those with which it started. The exception proves the rule, as we see in the case of our own English Revolution of 1688. Properly considered, that was not a revolution, but a reaction. The revolution had been against the personal and unlimited monarchy of the Stuarts. In 1688 there was a return to the normal development of English society, which had been violently broken. It may fairly be said that a revolution to be successful must be a reaction—that is, it must be a return to an organic historical sequence, which for some reason or other has been interrupted.

Parallels are not to be trusted, if it is attempted to elaborate them in detail, but a sober and scientific generalisation may be of high practical value. At the close of the Great War many people indulged in roseate forecasts of a new world—a land fit for heroes to live in, a land inspired with the spirit of the trenches, a land of co-operation and national and international goodwill. Such hasty idealists were curiously blind to the lessons of the past, and had they considered what happened after the Napoleonic wars they might have found a juster perspective. With a curious exactness the history of the three years after Waterloo has repeated itself to-day. There were the same economic troubles—the same rise in the cost of living, with which wages could not keep pace; the same shrinking of foreign exports owing to difficulties of

exchange ; the same cataclysmic descent of agricultural prices from the high levels of the war ; the same hostility to profiteers ; the same revolt against high taxation, and the same impossibility of balancing budgets without it. The Property tax then was the equivalent of our Excess Profits tax, and it is interesting to note that it was abolished in spite of the Government because the commercial community rose against it. There was the same dread of revolution, and the same blunders in the handling of labour, and there was relatively far greater suffering. Yet the land, in spite of countless mistakes, passed through the crisis and emerged into the sunlight of prosperity. In this case historic precedent is not without its warrant for hope.

One charge has been brought against the study of history—that it may kill reforming zeal. This has been well put by Lord Morley : " The study of all the successive stages and beliefs, institutions, laws, forms of art, only too soon grows into a substitute for practical criticism of all these things upon their merits and in themselves. Too exclusive attention to dynamic aspects weakens the energetic duties of the static. The method of history is used merely like any other scientific instrument. There is no more conscience in your comparative history than there is in comparative anatomy. You arrange ideals in classes and series ; but the classified ideal loses its vital spark and halo." There is justice in the warning, for a man may easily fall into the mood in which he sees everything as a repetition of the past, and the world bound on the iron bed of necessity, and may therefore lose his vitality and zest in the practical work of to-day. It is a danger to be guarded against, but to me it seems a far less urgent menace than its opposite—the tendency to forget the past and to adventure in a raw new world without any chart to guide us. History gives us a kind of chart, and we dare not surrender even a small rushlight in the darkness. The hasty reformer who does not remember the past will find himself condemned to repeat it.

There is little to sympathise with in the type of mind which is always inculcating a lack-lustre moderation, and which has attained to such a pitch of abstraction that it finds nothing worth doing and prefers to stagnate in ironic contemplation. Nor is there more to be said for the temper which is always halving differences in a problem and trying to find a middle course. The middle course, mechanically defined, may be the wrong course. The business of a man steering up a difficult estuary is to keep to the deep-water channel, and that channel

may at one hour take him near the left shore and at another hour close to the right shore. The path of false moderation sticks to the exact middle of the channel, and will almost certainly land the pilot on a sandbank. These are the vices that spring from a narrow study of history, and the remedy is a broader and juster interpretation. At one season it may be necessary to be a violent innovator, and at another to be a conservative; but the point is that a clear objective must be there, and some chart of the course to steer by. History does not provide a perfect chart, but it gives us something better than guess-work. It is a bridle on crude haste; but it is not less a spur for timidity and false moderation. Above all it is a guide and a comforter to sane idealism. "The true Past departs not," Carlyle wrote, "nothing that was worthy in the Past departs; no Truth or Goodness realised by man ever dies, or can die; but all is still here, and, recognised or not, lives and works through endless change."

JOHN BUCHAN.

[The spelling of place-names in this volume follows broadly that of the *Imperial Gazetteer* and 1/1,000,000 Survey of India. A few exceptions, such as Haidarabad, Nipal, and Karnatik, will be noted.—Ed.]

NOTE

The Historical portion of this volume is the work of Sir Verney Lovett, K.C.S.I., M.A., Reader in Indian history at Oxford University, late of the Indian Civil Service. The Economics have been written by Mr. H. R. C. Hailey, I.C.S., C.I.E., C.B.E., mainly from a valuable statistical paper compiled for this book by the late Sir William Meyer, G.C.I.E., K.C.S.I., High Commissioner for India in London and ex-Member of Council and Financial Secretary in India. Full acknowledgment is also due to Dr. J. Coggin Brown, O.B.E., F.G.S., who compiled the material dealing with the minerals of the country.

The whole volume has been prepared under the care of Major-General Lord Edward Gleichen.

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THE India known to Herodotus was the Punjab, the country of the river Indus [1]; the easternmost region of the inhabited world, the twentieth satrapy of the Persian empire. Later ancient writers thought of India as a wider area of which the Punjab formed part. To Europeans of the Middle Ages India, or the Indies, signified a far-away eastern land, renowned for the spices and costly commodities which it supplied. Afterwards this land became the East Indies, as other Indies had been discovered in the far West, and the name India was applied to the countries between the Persian Gulf and the Malay Peninsula. In our own day India denotes the subcontinent of irregularly triangular shape which lies between Cape Comorin and the Himalayas, stretching into the mainland of Asia as far as Baluchistan on the west and Burma on the east. Burma is part of the British-Indian Empire; but, cut off from India by a series of forest-clad ranges, it has been occupied by Mongolian tribes who have united to form the nation known as Burmese.

The physical aspects of India have often been described. It is sufficient here to indicate those particular features which from remote ages have largely shaped her history. Triangular in shape, on two sides she is bounded by an enormous sea-board of about 3,400 miles. On the third she is fenced in by mountain ranges, of which the Himalayas are the central and most impregnable. As these ranges turn westward and southward toward the Arabian Sea, they are here and there traversed by passes which have frequently given access to invading armies but have not encouraged the advance of tribes or families encumbered by women and children. Raids upon a large scale have been easily practicable; but racial invasions have slowed down; and this circumstance, combined with the decimation of the women and children of conquering peoples,

[1] The Sanskrit word "sindhu" means a river and particularly the Indus.

has produced upon India certain marked results. There has never been extermination of the previous inhabitants by any invader. On the contrary, successive waves of invaders have settled themselves upon the top of conquered populations. From these populations the new-comers have taken wives, to replace the women lost on the journey from the base. Thus the piecemeal nature of successive conquests and the enforced intercourse between conquerors and conquered have produced a remarkable continuity of Indian civilisation. Despite periodic invasions of the country by peoples of widely divergent races, religions and customs, many affluent streams have been absorbed into two particular systems.

The prevailing climate of the plains of Upper India, named Hindostan by the Persians and Aryavarta (Aryan territory) by the Brahmans, has contributed to mould Indian history. The blazing sun of the hot-weather months, their lurid noon-day air laden with grains of dust swept up by burning winds from parched plains, the steamy heat of the monsoon season, its torrential downpours, have conduced to supineness and have borne heavily on settlers of Central Asian ancestry. One race of these after another has established itself in a dominant position in the Gangetic plain, only to lose gradually the redundant strength and martial fibre to which its original success was due, to be merged by degrees in a less vigorous population, and to be conquered in its turn by a fresh army of invaders. Only as long as the victors could stiffen their ranks by continual recruitment from the countries of their origin were they able to maintain their supremacy as a separate and a ruling race. To secure this source of supply necessitated the holding of territory on each side of the mountain barrier, that is, the simultaneous possession of the countries now called Afghanistan and the Punjab. Several dynasties attempted this, but before long they found themselves unable to retain their hold on regions so severely separated by nature. They paid the penalty exacted by a semi-tropical climate, losing their original vigour, and becoming absorbed in the mass of their subjects or conquered by fresh invaders. No conquerors from Central Asia, subjected for generations to depressing climatic influences, exposed to continual risk of overthrow from the countries of their origin, were able to set up long-enduring kingdoms. They established the Gangetic valley as the main seat of empire, the centre of political and cultural movements which spread throughout the sub-continent. But India south of the Nar-

bada River and Vindhya Range remained largely a country apart, although sometimes its kingdoms were reduced to ineffective subjugation. While, however, a northern empire was occupied in such adventures, its own dominions were threatened by domestic revolt and incursions of foreign enemies whose martial vigour was still unsapped. By its culture the North established a lasting dominion over the South, but never by force of arms.

We have seen that conditions on the land frontiers of India have precluded invasion on a large scale. Nor in earlier ages was her coast-line much more inviting. "The succession of militant traders who landed on the narrow strip of fertile but malarious country which fringes Western India, found themselves cut off from the interior by the forest-clad barrier of the western Ghats, while on the eastern side of the peninsula, the low coast, harbourless from Cape Comorin to Balasore, is guarded by dangerous shallows backed by a line of pitiless surf."[1]

Isolated by land and sea, India is divided by geographical conditions into three main regions: (*a*) the glorious mountains of the Himalaya or abode of snow, (*b*) the great northern plains which form the basin of the Indus, the Ganges and their tributaries, (*c*) the hills and the wolds of the Deccan, separated from the north by a barrier of which the chief features are the Narbada River and the Vindhya Range, and dividing the Gangetic valley from the Tamil States to the south of the peninsula.

Each of these regions has its ethnic character. Along the line of the lower ranges of the Himalayas live peoples of mixed Mongolian descent. The plains of the north have been the highway of Aryan, Afghan and Turkish invasion. The features of many of its people testify to Aryan descent. The Deccan (South) and the Peninsula have been the abiding-place of the Dravidians, who are among the oldest of Indian races. Baluchistan with its blend of Arab, Afghan, Scythian or Turki types, and Burma with its blend of Mongolian types, guard the south-west and eastern land frontiers of the Empire.

Risley divides the peoples of all these regions into seven main physical types.

(*a*) The *Turko-Iranian*, formed by a fusion of Turki and Persian elements in which the former predominate, represented by the Baluchis and Afghans of the Baluchistan Agency and the North-west Frontier Province.

[1] Risley, *People of India.*

(*b*) *Indo-Aryan*, occupying the Punjab Rajputana and Kashmir, having as its characteristic members the Rajputs, Khatris and Jats (this type most closely resembles that ascribed to the original Aryan invaders).

(*c*) *Scytho-Dravidian*, comprising the Maratha Brahmans, the Kumbis and the Coorgs, probably formed by a mixture of Scytho and Dravidian types.

(*d*) *Aryo-Dravidian*, found in the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh, in parts of Rajputana, in Bihar, probably the result of the intermixture in varying proportions of the Indo-Aryan and Dravidian types, the former element predominating in the higher types.

(*e*) *Mongol-Dravidian*, found in Bengal and Orissa, a blend of the Dravidian and Mongoloid elements with a strain of Indo-Aryan blood in the higher groups.

(*f*) *Mongoloid*, found in the Himalayas, Nipal, Assam and Burma.

(*g*) *Dravidian*, extending from Ceylon to the Ganges Valley, possibly the original type of the population of India, now modified to a varying degree by the admixture of Aryan, Scythian and Mongoloid elements.

The contrasts between these various types are perceptible to any observer. But, as Risley points out, the areas mainly occupied by each melt into each other insensibly, "and although at the close of a day's journey from one ethnic tract to another, an observer whose attention had been directed to the subject would realise clearly enough that the physical characteristics of the people had undergone an appreciable change, he would certainly be unable to say at what particular stage in his progress the transformation had taken place." [1]

Languages are many, and so are social divisions, tribes or castes; but castes will be dealt with further on. The linguistic survey of India recognises 147 distinct languages grouped under 9 differentiated families. The peoples of Northern and Central India and of the Western Deccan speak various languages which have sprung from vernaculars akin to Sanskrit, the literary language of the Brahmans. The most notable of these tongues are Hindi, Bengali and Marathi. Urdu or Hindustani, a blend of Hindi and Persian, has been a lingua franca since the earlier days of Muslim ascendency, although in the south and far east it is still comparatively little understood. Its script is the Persian, which differs very widely from the Nagari or Sanskritic character and others akin thereto. In

[1] Risley, *People of India*, p. 33.

the south Dravidian languages are spoken, of which Tamil is the oldest, richest and most highly organised.

Divided as India has always been by many and various circumstances, it was only when her destinies were controlled by a race independent of land-communications, and able, with small let or hindrance, to retain its primitive energy, that, obtaining a new security, she was able to progress towards a unity and national consciousness which in earlier times had been constantly thwarted by the menace or reality of devastating invasion. The fruits of that progress were gathered in those memorable years 1914–18. Never before in all the ages had the peoples of India stood together in one consolidated, prolonged effort. Never was clearer testimony borne to the character of a system of government. That system has now given place to another which is designed to prepare the way for further and wider change. In these pages the endeavour will be made to present clearly the outstanding events in the latest stage of a long, eventful history. But in order to make the incidents of this stage clearly understood, the story of earlier stages, and more particularly of those which are nearest to our own time, will be traced as fully as space permits. Recent constitutional changes have laid upon the Services of the Crown in India a task honourable indeed, but of a difficulty which we can appreciate only when we look back into the past. And before we endeavour to throw historical light on its complexities, we must sketch the political outlines of the Indian Empire as it stands to-day, noticing in particular a climatic circumstance which regulates economic conditions in every province and state.

The Indian Empire consists of nine major provinces containing a population of 243,000,000 and six minor administrations peopled by about 4,000,000. It includes Native States under British suzerainty, which contain another 72,000,000.

The *major* provinces and their populations are Madras, peopled by 42,300,000 [1]; Bengal, by 46,700,000; Bihar and Orissa, by 34,000,000; the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh, by 45,600,000; Bombay, by 19,300,000 (including about 100,000 Parsees or Persians domiciled in India for centuries, pre-eminent in industrial and commercial enterprise, Zoroastrians by religion); Assam, by 7,600,000; the Punjab, by 20,700,000; the Central Provinces and Berar, peopled by 13,800,000; Burma, peopled by 13,200,000.

The *minor* provinces are the North-west Frontier Province,

[1] Census of 1921.

peopled by 2,250,000; British Baluchistan, peopled by 422,000 Ajmir-Merwara, peopled by 496,000; Coorg, peopled by 164,000; Andaman and Nicobar Islands, peopled by 27,000; Delhi, peopled by 486,000. (It was constituted an "administrative enclave" under a Chief Commissioner in 1912 when the Imperial capital was transferred from Calcutta.) All the minor provinces are administered by Chief Commissioners on behalf of the Central Government.

The Native States, with a population of 72,000,000, number about 700, of which 60 or 70 are of major importance; but many, especially in the Bombay Presidency, are ruled by petty chiefs and feudatories. All are on a standing different from that of the independent neighbouring States of Tibet, Nipal, Bhutan and Afghanistan, with which the Government of India has treaty relationships. The foreign affairs of the Native States, their dealings with each other, are managed by and under the direction of the Government of India. Subject in every case to the reservation of jurisdiction over British subjects and cantonment towns occupied by British troops, subject also to conditions regarding the strength of a State's armed forces, the ruling Chiefs divide their internal sovereignty with the paramount power "in proportions which differ greatly according to the history and importance of the several States and which are regulated by treaties or less formal engagements, partly by 'Sanads' or charters and partly by usage."[1] The principal Native States are:

Haidarabad,[2] with a population of 12,454,000, ruled by the Nizam, a prince of Turkoman descent belonging to a dynasty founded in 1724 by a Viceroy of the Moghal Empire.

Maisur, peopled by 5,977,000, ruled by a Maharaja, a prince of an ancient Hindu line dispossessed for a time by a successful Muslim soldier and his son, but reinstated by the British.

Travancore, with a population of 4,006,000, under another Hindu prince claiming descent from an ancient Tamil House.

Kashmir and Jammu, with a population of 3,322,000, ceded to the British after the first Sikh War and made over by them to a Rajput, appointed Chief of Jammu by Ranjit Singh.

Baroda (population 2,122,000), *Gwalior* (population 3,176,000), *Indore* (population 1,148,000)—all three ruled by Maratha princes descended from successful soldiers who carved out dominions for themselves in the confusion of the eighteenth century.

[1] Ilbert, *Government of India*, p. 165.
[2] Conventionally, Hyderabad.

Udaipur (population 1,393,000), *Jaipur* (population 2,329,000) —Rajput States ruled by princes of ancient lineage.

Bhopal (population 691,000), founded as an independent kingdom by an Afghan officer of the Emperor Aurangzeb and now ruled by the Begam, the only female ruler in India.

It should be added that small Indian territories are still held by the French and the Portuguese:

Pondicherry, the principal French settlement was first founded in 1674.

Goa, the capital of a small Portuguese province, was conquered by Albuquerque in 1510.

The lines on which British provinces and Native States are divided have been marked out by history, and modified here and there by administrative arrangements.

Of the 319,000,000 of India only 10·2 per cent. dwell in towns. India has always been, is now, and will remain, predominantly an agricultural country. Her greatest natural asset is her soil. Her greatest blessing is a good monsoon. The concentration of almost all the annual rainfall in four consecutive months makes these months of supreme importance. If the monsoon fails over large areas, as it not infrequently does fail, a peasant population, which in spite of frequent inroads of epidemics breeds to the very margin of subsistence, is liable to suffer severely; and for this reason the history of India has been marked by famines which have only ceased to be desolating since irrigation has been widely extended by canals; since railways and metalled roads have enormously improved communications, and since a careful system of famine prevention and relief has been elaborated by the British Government.

As Rabindranath Tagore has said, "India is many countries packed into one geographical receptacle." But divided, as Indians are by varieties of race and language, they are all marked off from other Asiatics by distinct characteristics. How far do they differ from ourselves? To quote an acute observer,[1] "Great as are the differences between us and our Indian fellow-citizens, the points of resemblance are even more remarkable. . . . There is certainly no other non-European race in the world that could so rapidly and so perfectly acquire our language and adapt themselves to our manners; nor is there any race in whom we are less conscious of an estranging foreignness. The fact is, no doubt, that India is leavened with Aryanism; and that even this remote cousinship tells in the end."

[1] Mr. William Archer.

PART I—BEFORE PLASSEY

I

THE HINDU PERIOD

THE genesis of the religious and social system which is known as Hinduism and has for so many ages affected the lives and destinies of countless millions is to be found in the institutions of the Aryans, who entered India between 2,000 and 1,300 years before the Christian era, and were apparently a cheerful and intelligent people worshipping personified natural powers with the aid of their priests and by means of prayer and sacrifice, looking towards an immortality spent in heaven with the gods and glorified ancestors. Their political unit was the household, which often included many individuals, presided over by the eldest male. Their households were grouped into tribes headed by Rajas (chiefs or kings). As they made their way through the Punjab into the Gangetic plain and on beyond, conquering and to some extent displacing the darker Dravidians,[1] their religious and political institutions underwent considerable change. Their cheerful nature-worship became intermingled with darker elements derived from Dravidian sources. Their worship became more elaborate, more ritualistic and more mystical. Nature-worship was maintained by anthropomorphism ; and it seems possible that leaders among men obtained divine honours after death. The due performance of worship was held to depend on complicated ceremonies carried out by experts ; and simultaneously the original simplicity of the political structure developed into a system of small territorial kingdoms consisting of groups of settlements, each settlement made up of village-units. The whole organisation gradually assumed a shape adapted to peace rather than to war. The Rajas began to lose some of the prestige which the function of war-leader had secured for them in days of continual strife, and except when hostilities were actually in progress found their importance in the community, though

[1] Named after Dravida, the ancient name of the Tamil country in Southern India.

still dominant, somewhat curtailed by the position of the intellectual and priestly orders.

These tendencies can be traced still further in the picture presented by the two great Hindu epics, the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata* which, although in their present form probably not older than the Christian era, contain earlier tradition illustrative of changes which came over the Aryan-speaking peoples in the course of the centuries immediately succeeding their settlement in India. Between the period of the *Vedas* (the early hymns of these peoples) and the period with which the Epics are generally concerned, the caste system had developed. *Caste*, derived from the Latin *castus* (pure), may be defined as an elaborately regulated social exclusiveness with reference to diet and marriage. It has resulted in the division of its millions of followers into thousands of hereditary groups, each of which is closely knit by rules of ceremonial purity, and by these rules effectively separated from other groups.

The original basis of caste was probably a sense of distinction of race indicated by differences of colour. The poets of the *Rig Veda* recognised four classes of men: the *Brahmans* or priests and intellectuals, the *Kshatriyas* or warriors, the *Vaisyas* or traders and agriculturists, the *Sudras* or servile residuum. The difference between the first three classes, which represented the Aryan conquerors, and the fourth class, which consisted of a portion of the earlier inhabitants of India, was one of colour. The remaining peoples of the country were termed barbarians by the Brahmans, who, presiding over other classes, treating families bound together by offerings to common ancestors as their congregations or religious units, and anxious to consolidate their own authority, elaborated rules for the preservation of ceremonial purity. From the earliest times they cultivated learning, which they regarded as their exclusive property. They developed their spiritual ideals in voluminous literary works and, splitting into various fraternities, were imitated by other classes.

Social and occupational compartments became numerous in every class. Each compartment was filled exclusively by a certain community or caste. The *dharma* or duties of each member of a caste consisted of the observance of particular caste regulations and of such general obligations as reverence for Brahmans and for the sacred cow. Violation of dharma involved a costly expiation ceremony or expulsion from caste and social ruin. As tribes outside the caste-pale, whether Dravidian or descended from the south-Mongolian nomads who

had entered India from the east, gradually adopted Brahmanic teaching, they became Hindus, members of the community which dwelt beside the great river, and accepting Brahmanic scriptures and gods, invited Brahmans to preside at all domestic events and ceremonies. The Brahmanic religion was elastic. All converts could form new castes and call themselves Hindus if they would submit to Brahman guidance. Some indeed might even be reckoned as Kshatriyas. Aborigines, after admission, might, if they chose, return to their original deities, provided only that they continued to accept the authority and divine right of Brahmans.

It has been truly said that the caste system, with its rigid scale of social rank, is in remarkable accord with the doctrine of *Karma*, or "action," which enjoins on every Hindu the obligation of doing his duty in that station in which he has been born. Hinduism teaches that every soul is an emanation of an impersonal supreme Spirit, a desireless, actionless intelligence which is always and everywhere present behind all the gods and behind the flux and change of the universe. Sparks from this divine central spirit enter one body after another. Each spark or soul may be in one life a god, in another a man, in another an animal. No soul is released from repeated re-birth until, after accumulating sufficient merit in many lives, it returns to and is absorbed in the Divine source of its origin. At each re-birth its body or status is determined by its actions in previous existences. Intervals between deaths and births are generally believed to be spent in a temporary heaven or hell, according to deserts. It follows from the creed of Karma that Brahmans and Kshatriyas have won their high position by accumulated merit. Sudras and outcasts deserve their lot. It is useless to educate them. Their Karma must take its course. Their very touch defiles a Brahman.

Caste is the foundation and essence of Hinduism. It has been a great stabilising force, and has preserved, as in a mould, the art, the traditions and the spiritual ideals of ancient Brahmanism. But it has sternly repressed individual liberty and has obstructed intercourse with foreign cultures. It has condemned large sections of the peoples of India to scorn and degradation almost beyond the hope of redemption; it has exposed social reform and industrial development to formidable obstacles. Caste indeed may be described as the antithesis of Western individualism, but it has preserved intact against all comers the spirit and teaching of Hinduism through long ages of conflict and confusion.

The compilations termed the Mahabharata (story of the great war of early India between nations and tribes arrayed on two sides) and the Ramayana (adventures of Rama) include elements of different periods. Some go back to the Vedic age; but in the sixth book of the Mahabharata appears the famous *Bhagavad Gita* (Lord's song), a philosophical poem of a much later date; and both compilations have undergone much re-editing at the hands of poets, professional reciters and Brahmans generally. The final recension probably took place about A.D. 200. The two epics contain some substantially identical verses. The tales told therein have inspired and inspire to-day Hindu thought and Hindu folklore. They show the caste system established in force. They insist strongly on the necessity of paying reverence to Brahmans. They exhibit Northern India split up into kingdoms ruled by monarchs among whom war and the chase were objects of high endeavour, whose customs and court-life present considerable resemblance to those of old-fashioned Hindu princes in our own day.

The Raja, or King, of the Mahabharata is assisted by counsellors, but his decisions are his own. He is the commander-in-chief and supreme civil ruler. The man who even thinks of doing him harm meets with grief here and Hell hereafter.[1] The Raja is entitled to a sixth share of the gross revenue of the country. He must treat all classes of his subjects justly. Above all he must be a man who can govern with a complete and strict reliance on the "science of chastisement," who can protect his subjects from "malice domestic and foreign levy." If he fails to do this he is like a leaky boat on a sea. He takes upon himself a quarter of the sins of his kingdom.[2] In the last resort he absolves his subjects from their allegiance, which they may transfer to a more capable ruler. "If a powerful king approaches kingdoms torn by anarchy, from desire of annexing them to his dominions, the people should go forward and receive the invader with respect." A king should be heedful of his subjects as also of his foes. "If he becomes heedless, they fall on him like vultures upon carrion."[3]

When we remember that, taken in conjunction with other compilations (the Puranas), adapted and translated into vernacular, these epics have for ages proved a great engine of mass-education and have largely contributed to the fact that Hindu civilisation and thought have remained fundamentally intact from those days to these, we can see how the ancient

[1] Santi Parvan, p. 221.
[2] Drona Parvan, p. 625.
[3] Santi Parvan, p. 289.

Hindu conception of the duties and liabilities of a ruler has influenced the course of Indian history. The ruler who, if bold and despotic, was strong and ready to protect received obedience.

The hero of the Ramayana is a god-man whose fame and influence have penetrated India. He and his wife Sita are held up as the ideals of noble manhood and perfect wifehood. The story of their adventures, told in many Indian tongues, has deeply moved generations of peoples impressed by nothing so much as by remarkable human personality. There are evidences in the Mahabharata of the fact that the Aryans had been brought into contact with Mongoloid as well as Dravidian races, and that the Hindu social structure was sufficiently elastic to enable Mongoloid princes to be regarded as Kshatriyas who did not observe ordinary caste rules. Both Mahavira, the founder of Jainism, and Gautama or Sakya Muni, the great Buddha (or enlightened one), were aristocrats of this description who renounced worldly vanities for absorption in religious meditation. They taught in Bihar and in the eastern portion of the present United Provinces.

The religions which these two reformers preached started merely as varieties of Hinduism. Neither rejected caste. Jainism, however, particularly insisted on the sanctity of life, teaching that not only men and animals but plants, air, wind and fire possess various degrees of consciousness. It still remains the creed of a sect. Buddhism, after the death of its founder, divorced itself from Hinduism, and became one of the great faiths of mankind. Gautama, after long contemplation of human ills, preached that liberation from the weary round of re-birth could never be attained through magical ceremony or priestly ritual, but only by right living and right thinking. For the Supreme Soul into whom the Hindu hopes to be absorbed eventually, he substituted Nirvana or eternal nothingness. After his death, which is believed to have occurred about 480 B.C., his followers proclaimed his divinity. Their faith was about 260 B.C. adopted by the great Hindu Emperor Asoka, who devoted himself earnestly to its propagation, sending Buddhist missionaries far and wide to foreign countries. To him it is mainly due that, although eventually Buddhism was completely vanquished by Brahmanism in the country of its origin, it spread over Ceylon, Tibet, China, Siam and Burma, penetrating even to Japan. Before its virtual extinction in India it checked Brahman sacerdotalism, and, together with Jainism, impressed on Hindus "ahimsa," the avoidance of injury to every form of animal life.

A great event of the earlier Hindu period was the invasion of the Punjab by Alexander the Great. The Indus was then considered the frontier of the Persian Empire. Alexander found a university of Vedic learning at the city of Taxila, which occupied a site, now deserted, between Rawalpindi and Attock.[1] Advancing farther, he fought a great battle on the banks of the Jhelum against one Porus, whom he defeated and subdued. He pressed on farther, but was forced to retreat by a mutiny in his army, and sailing down the Indus to the neighbourhood of Karachi, left India in October 323 B.C. He died two years later. His retirement was speedily followed by the expulsion of Greek garrisons from the basin of the Indus by Chandragupta Maurya, sovereign of Magadha (South Bihar), who defeated Seleukus Nikator, one of the best generals of the great Macedonian, wresting from him territories corresponding to the modern Afghanistan and Baluchistan.

Chandragupta, before his death, was master of an empire stretching over these countries and Northern India. He was assisted by an able Brahman minister named Kautilya, and ruled despotically, by means of a highly-organised system of government, from Pataliputra, the modern Patna. His court was largely affected by Persian influences. His fame has been overshadowed by that of his great grandson Asoka, one of the chief evangelisers of the world, in whose days the Mauryan Empire extended from the north-west frontier to the northern districts of Maisur. But Asoka himself waged one war only, for the annexation of the Kingdom of Kalinga on the Bay of Bengal. The spectacle of the resultant devastation and misery operated so powerfully on his mind that he turned from Brahmanism and became an ardent Buddhist. From 261 B.C. to the year of his death he devoted himself to the propagation of his new faith, sending missionaries to far countries, and causing edicts to be graven on rocks and pillars in order to inculcate humanity and loving-kindness. Into the merciless despotism of his predecessors he infused a new spirit, turning their administrative and military machine into an instrument adapted to secure the welfare of his people. When he died, in 232 B.C., Buddhism had spread abroad west and east to far countries. But after his death his empire speedily dissolved, and was succeeded by chaos and invasions from Central Asia, from Bactria, Parthia, Kabul, from the north of the Jaxartes.

For a considerable period after the break-up of Alexander's

[1] Extensive excavations on this site are proceeding and have yielded results of great archæological interest.

empire, Hellenistic States existed on the north-west frontier of India. With these the Mauryan Empire maintained friendly intercourse. Mauryan sculpture shows signs of Hellenic and of Persian influence. About 175 B.C., when the Mauryan dynasty had fallen, a Greek King of Kabul and the Punjab, apparently Menander, invaded the Gangetic plain and threatened Pataliputra, but was eventually repelled. In the first and second centuries A.D. there was considerable trade between India and the Roman Empire, the frontier of which was, in A.D. 116, pushed by Trajan as far as the Persian Gulf. Commerce was both overland and sea-borne from Egypt and Arabia to ports on the Malabar coast. Yet neither Greece nor Rome left any substantial impress upon India.

In the early years of the fourth century A.D. emerged another indigenous attempt at empire building, which for a time offered some prospect of a unified India, only to dissolve into chaos under the hammer-blows of northern invaders. The empire of the Guptas, governed from Pataliputra like that of the Mauryans, is reported by Fa Hien, a Chinese traveller, who wandered about India between 401 and 410, to have been peaceable, prosperous and gently governed. The caste system was rigorous; and outcastes were compelled to live apart from centres of population. But the people, as a whole, were happy and were governed in a kindly fashion which differed widely from earlier Mauryan methods. The later Gupta period was cotemporaneous with a remarkable literary and artistic renaissance, some achievements of which still survive. But all the great buildings with which the Gupta Emperors embellished Pataliputra have succumbed to consuming time or the iconoclastic zeal of Muslim conquerors.

The Gupta period was succeeded by invasion and chaos. The peoples who inhabited or occupied ancient Iran and Turkestan were largely impelled to migrate to India by the aridity of their own lands, lands in which cultivated districts are rare and far apart.[1] At this period hordes of Hunas (or Huns) occupied Kabul and poured down the passes of the North-west Frontier into the Gangetic plain. Their kingdom, however, endured but a short space as they were smitten on the Oxus by the Turks. But, with other tribes who had participated in their adventure, they contributed a new and turbulent element to the mixed races of Northern India. In the sixth century they found their niche in the elastic structure of Hindu society and were accepted as Kshatriyas.

[1] Sykes, *History of Persia*, vol. i, p. 8.

Early in the seventh century there arose another outstanding figure, who continued, though upon a lesser scale, the Maurya-Gupta tradition. King Harsha, whose capital was Kanauj, succeeded in subjugating the country now known as the United Provinces and Bihar, together with a great part of Bengal. He even attempted to extend his sway into the Deccan, but was defeated by a Raja of Huna extraction. In Harsha's time came the famous Chinese traveller Yuan Chwang, who remained in India between 630 and 643. The picture which he gives of the condition of the country in the early seventh century is in striking contrast with that of his predecessor Fa Hien. Everywhere he encountered pathetic evidence of past greatness and present decay—pasture-land overrun with savage beasts, vast ruined cities set in the wilderness and inhabited only by a few poor peasants. The roads were unsafe, and he had some unpleasant experiences with bandits. Buddhism was definitely on the down-grade as compared with the Brahmanical system. He was, however, impressed by the wealth of Harsha, as well as by that monarch's remarkable habit of distributing his savings in the form of largesse every five years. Harsha died about 646; and an insult to a Chinese envoy led to an invasion of his kingdom by Srong Tsan Gampo, ruler of Tibet, who annexed Nipal and occupied Tirhut. He introduced Buddhism into his own country, and imported from India the alphabet which is still used in Tibet.

A period of confusion followed his invasion; and very little indeed is known about events between A.D. 650 and A.D. 1200. Warlike clans of mixed blood spread over Upper India, subduing the older royal families and changing the boundaries of their kingdoms. These clans became known as Rajputs, sons of Kings, and were admitted by the Brahmans to the rank of Kshatriyas. Some were of pre-Aryan stock; others of Huna; others seem to have been chosen by their kinsfolk as an alternative to intolerable anarchy. It is clear that the designation Rajput originally denoted rank and not race. From the end of the seventh to the thirteenth century Northern India was in a state of troubled disintegration.

In the south, however, the Tamil Kingdoms largely held their own. The most famous, the Chola, was renowned for its fleet and for its flourishing trade.

Wide as were the ethnical differences that separated these peoples from the mixed population of Upper India, they had become saturated with the culture of the Ganges Valley. They

rejected the Buddhist evangel and entered the fold of Brahmanism.

We have now briefly surveyed the genesis and growth of a great system which, including in close union the social and religious organisation of human life, developed gradually in the Ganges Valley and spread in course of time over the whole of India. The chief historical events of those far-away centuries which we may call the exclusively Hindu period have been summarised.

We have seen the rise of Buddhism and its eventual failure in the land of its birth. We have noticed the emergence of two great but short-lived Hindu empires, fugitive intervals in centuries of disintegration which, while they lasted, presented remarkable features. We have observed the conquest of successive hosts of invaders by Hindu culture. We now pass on to observe the arrival of more invaders, differing from all their predecessors in their allegiance to a positive, unifying, militant religion. Between them and the Hindus there could be no assimilation. But, forced in upon itself by Muhammadan conquest, Hinduism nevertheless preserved its ancient vitality completely unimpaired.

II

THE MUHAMMADAN PERIOD TO THE DEATH OF AKBAR

Within eighty years from the death of the prophet Muhammad in A.D. 632 his successors, the Arab Khalifs, spiritual and temporal sovereigns, became masters of Egypt, Arabia, Persia, Western Turkistan and Sind. They imposed their religion at the point of the sword, or compelled those who would not accept it to ransom their lives by money payments.

Early in the eighth century the province of Sind was ruled by a young Muslim Arab general, Muhammad Bin Kazim, and thereafter for centuries was dominated by Arabs. But when Islam came in force to India it came by the north gate through Afghan converts, who had themselves accepted the creed of the Prophet but recently. Notable among these was Sabuktagin, the founder of the mountain kingdom of Ghazni. His raids were limited to the Punjab. His hardy warriors scattered loose temporary combinations of Rajas, acquiring large booty which they carried off in triumph to their native mountains.

In 997 Sabuktagin's place was taken by his son, the famous Mahmud of Ghazni who, between the date of his accession and A.D. 1027, the year of his death, conducted seventeen raids into India, penetrating as far as Benares in one direction and Somnath in another. He not only seized and removed many precious objects, but destroyed things destructible which bore traces of non-Muslim hands. Hindu temples and shrines were burnt or razed to the ground. Hindu images were broken into fragments or carried away to form road-metal. The treasures of India went to enrich the city of Ghazni; and Mahmud's court became famous for its splendour. Before he died he annexed a large part of the Punjab and probably some Sind territory. He had found that the Rajput's chiefs and their retainers were seldom able to resist for long the fiery onslaught of the mountaineers of Central Asia, to whom victory stood for plunder and death for paradise. He had so weakened the power of the Rajput chiefs of Northern India that their subjugation became easy for subsequent hordes of invaders.

Mahmud's dynasty endured till the year A.D. 1150, when it was crushed and obliterated by a prince of the neighbouring kingdom of Ghor. Between 1191 and 1206 Muhammad Ghori and his lieutenants established unchallenged supremacy in Northern India, breaking completely the power of the Rajput chieftains and the political structure of the country. Even Bihar and Bengal were overrun. On the assassination of Mahmud in 1206 the bulk of his dominions passed to Katub-ud-din Aibak, a Turk who, as was the custom of the time, had been elevated to high office from among the slaves of his master on account of his personal force and ability. He succeeded in maintaining unimpaired the heritage of which he took possession, and founded the dynasty of the "Slave Kings" of Delhi. The first of the historical cities known collectively as Delhi had been built near the close of the tenth century A.D. It now became the headquarters of the "Slave Sultans," who for eighty-four years predominated in Northern India, relying on the swords of their Muslim followers and terrorising their Hindu subjects.

In 1290 they were succeeded by the Khilji dynasty, the most notable member of which, Ala-ud-din, required his advisers to draw up "rules and regulations for grinding down the Hindus, and for depriving them of that wealth and property which foster disaffection and rebellion." The Khilji in time gave place to the Tughlak Sultans, who also followed a policy of ruthless repression of Hindus. In 1340 the empire of

Muhammad-bin-Tughlak included Northern India and much of the peninsula over which, although a man of culture and talent, he ruled with fanatical ferocity. Obedience to his authority varied necessarily in degree from province to province, being largely determined by proximity to or distance from Delhi. But it is certain that he possessed power sufficient to cause a vast amount of human misery.

The Muslim invaders were a comparatively small minority who fought with the consciousness that they must conquer or perish. They were bound together by a fierce religious enthusiasm against which Hinduism, dominated by the caste system and the creed of Karma, afforded no counteracting stimulus. They were eaters of meat from mountains and cool climates, stronger and heavier generally than opponents nurtured on vegetarian diet in the enervating atmosphere of the Gangetic plain, split by countless divisions and lacking effective leaders. Ruling by terrorism, the new-comers multiplied rapidly, recruiting their ranks by immigrants from Central Asia and by Hindu converts. Their fanaticism was often tempered by discretion, and their Sultans sometimes contented themselves with merely exacting tribute from ruling Rajas. The vastness of India, the lack of communications, the torrential rains of monsoon seasons, impeded centralised administration; and many Hindu principalities and village-communities were seldom disturbed by the new-comers. As time went on, Muslims and Hindus reacted on each other, and evolved a common language in the shape of Urdu (the "camp-tongue"), which was Hindi intermixed with Persian and in a less degree with Arabic. Seclusion of women, according to Muslim custom, became widely prevalent among high-caste Hindus; and once an unsuccessful effort was made to find a creed which would attract Muslims and Hindus.

The power of the Delhi Sultans was constantly menaced from the north-west, notably by the Mongols under the conquering Chingiz Khan, and after his time. From the south, too, they were threatened with overthrow by revolting vassals. In 1347 Zafar Khan, the Afghan or Turki governor of the Deccan, founded the so-called Bahmani Kingdom; and when Muhammad-bin-Tughlak died in 1351, a Hindu empire was rising farther south with a new capital named Vijayanagar (city of victory). The Delhi Sultanate was shrinking rapidly when in 1398 Amir Timur of Samarqand, the famous Tamerlane, undertook the conquest of India with the professed object of restoring Islam in all its purity.

A Central Asian Turk and a zealous Muslim, Timur had conquered a large tract of Central Asia when in 1398 he despatched Pir Muhammad, one of his grandsons, to annex the Punjab. Late in the same year he crossed the Indus himself, at the head of 90,000 of his famous cavalry, and put to the sword all who resisted him, brushing aside the forces which Sultan Mahmud Tughlak had collected for the defence of Delhi. He then occupied the capital and extorted a large ransom. In the process of collection, disputes arose, with the result that Delhi was subjected to sack for five days. So thoroughly was the city gutted of all its treasures that it is said that only copper coin was to be found in it for the next half-century. In addition to plundering the city, Timur enslaved a large number of its inhabitants, carrying away with him, when he retired, hundreds of skilled artisans, whom he proposed to employ on the adornment of Samarqand. From Delhi he marched to Meerut, which he captured, massacring the inhabitants and making his way back to his own country, where he set to work to plan an invasion of China ; but fortunately for that country, death removed him in the year 1405 before his project had attained maturity.

For more than half a century after Timur's departure the Sultanate of Delhi remained in abeyance. Bengal, under an Afghan ruler, became entirely independent ; and a new Afghan principality sprang up, with its capital at Jaunpur. The Punjab remained under rulers nominally subject to the Sultans of Delhi, but in practice entirely independent. In 1450 one of these rulers, an Afghan or Pathan named Bahlol of the Lodi tribe, seized the throne of Delhi and proclaimed himself Sultan. He was successful in laying the foundations of another Empire, reconquered Jaunpur and extended his political influence as far as Benares and Bundelkhand. He founded a dynasty which came to an end when a rebellious Afghan chief in the Punjab invited Babar, King of Kabul, to overthrow the Delhi throne.

Before proceeding to the story of Babar's invasion, we must observe the position in the peninsula. South of the Narbada-Vindhya line a gradual extension of Muslim conquest had produced Muslim provincial governors, who soon developed into independent kings. Farther south Muslim progress was resisted by a powerful Hindu combination. Certain Kanarese feudal chiefs united to form an empire which, with its capital at Vijayanagar, would be strong enough to resist the invaders. For long the tide was stayed. Between the years 1482 and

1518 the Bahmani Kingdom, a source of untold misery to its Hindu subjects, split into five independent sultanates which constantly warred with each other and with the Vijayanagar Empire. Meantime many Persians, Turks, Arabs and Moghals settled in Southern India and married women of the country. The monuments of earlier Hindu civilisation suffered severely, and many Hindus were forcibly converted to Islam. In both the Muslim Sultanates and the Vijayanagar Empire the masses were kept in the strictest subjection.

At last the Muslim Sultans of the Deccan combined for a great effort, and on January 23, 1565, at Talikota, decisively defeated Ram Raya, the *de facto* ruler of Vijayanagar, who was beheaded on the battlefield. The Hindu capital was pillaged and reduced to ruins amid scenes of savage massacre and terror. The descendants of the Emperors were reduced to the position of petty chiefs. Thus perished an organised and highly cultured autocracy which had been a stronghold and a refuge to southern Hinduism. But we must return to Northern India, which had meantime succumbed to the domination of fresh invaders.

Zahir-ud-din Muhammad, known to history as Babar (the Tiger), was a descendant of Timur. In the year 1483 he was born at Ferghana in Central Asia. At eleven he found himself successor to his father as ruler of his country and was compelled at once to fight his uncles, who claimed the throne. At fourteen he took Samarqand after a long siege. Later on he lost both Samarqand and Ferghana; and after some fruitless years of exile and fighting, turning his back on his native country, at the head of a band of Turkomans he captured Kabul. Between the years 1519 and 1526 he invaded India four times. Early in 1526 he tried a fifth invasion, when, as he writes in his memoirs, "God most High, of His mercy and grace, cast down and defeated so powerful an enemy as Sultan Ibrahim" (of Delhi) "and made me master and conqueror of the mighty Empire of Hindustan."

Babar claimed kinship on his mother's side with the Mongol or Moghal conqueror Chingiz Khan, but he always called himself a Turk. In India, however, he was popularly ascribed to the race from which the dreaded Chingiz Khan had sprung.

On April 21, 1526, Babar, at the head of an army of Turkomans, Mongols and Afghans, numbering only 12,000, camp-followers included, but aided by a park of artillery, routed the hosts of Sultan Ibrahim on the historic field of Panipat near Delhi. His adversaries, he writes, "dispersed like carded wool

before the wind, and like moths scattered abroad." The Sultan and 15,000 of his followers were left dead on the field, and Babar occupied Agra and Delhi. In subsequent battles he defeated first a great Hindu confederacy under Rana Sangram Singh, the Rajput chief of the Mewar or Chitor State, and next the army of the Afghan rulers of Bengal and Bihar. Thus he made himself master of the plains of Upper India from the north-west frontier to the border of Bengal, winning over by his success and by the power of a fine personality many of the soldiers of his vanquished adversaries. But before he could establish a system of organised administration in the wide territories which he had annexed, he died at Agra at the age of forty-seven. His memoirs, written in Turki and since translated into Persian and English, abound in passages of vivid interest. He did not like India, and pined for the cool of his native mountains. By his own strong desire his body was taken to Kabul, where it now rests in a garden on a hill, which he had himself described as " the sweetest spot in the neighbourhood."

Severe and ruthless if judged by modern standards, Babar was yet a man of fine qualities. He is lauded by the Persian historian Farishta as liberal and generous, disarming vice and making " the wicked admire his virtue." He was strong, bold, courageous in the highest degree and possessed an iron physique. He was not only a great soldier, but a poet and a writer.

After his death his dominions were divided. Of his sons Kamran became King of Kabul and Kandahar, and Humayun succeeded to the Indian conquests. Humayun's days were few and troubled. At first he suffered defeat from Sher Shah, an Afghan chief who was master in Bihar. Driven into Sind by Sher Shah, Humayun eventually sought refuge in Persia. There the reigning monarch, Shah Tahmasp, belonged to the Shia school of Muslims, which refuses to recognise the Khilafat (tenure of office as Khalifa) of the first three successors of the Prophet as genuine, and declares the fourth Khalifa, Ali the Prophet's son-in-law, to be the only true Khalifa. Humayun himself belonged to the Sunni sect, which, basing its allegiance on the *sunnas*, or precedents, recognises the Khilafat of Muhammad's three immediate successors as well as that of Ali. Feeling between Shias and Sunnis often runs high in India.

Shah Tahmasp insisted on Humayun's becoming a Shia, and helped him to recover Kandahar from his brother Kamran, whom eventually he expelled from Kabul, imprisoned and blinded. In July 1555 he recovered Delhi and Agra ; but in

January 1556 he died of injuries received from a fall, leaving two sons, Akbar, aged thirteen, and Muhammad Hakim, aged ten. He had placed the latter in nominal command at Kabul.

On his father's death Akbar was proclaimed sovereign of Hindustan. Sher Shah, too, had died, after proving himself a strong and able ruler; but two of his nephews aspired to succeed him; and while these were disputing, Hemu, the minister of one, a Hindu grain-merchant by caste, seized Agra and Delhi and proclaimed himself king. This pretension was strongly resisted by Bairam Khan, Akbar's guardian, who on November 5, 1556, met and defeated Hemu in a pitched battle at Panipat. Hemu was killed; and, after the savage fashion of the time, the heads of the slain were piled up in the shape of a tower. Agra and Delhi were occupied by the victors, and the pretensions of Sher Shah's nephews were decisively disposed of. Akbar owed much to Bairam Khan, from whose tutelage, however, he speedily emancipated himself as soon as the imperial authority had been established over Delhi and its adjacent districts. Then he set himself at once to recover all the territory conquered by Babar, to add to it further territory and to weld the whole into a mighty empire. He possessed the personal qualities necessary to achieve success; and he decided early that to make success of lasting value an altogether new policy must be adopted. No Indian empire could be stable unless it rested on the goodwill of Hindus as well as Muslims. He reversed the fanatical policy of previous Sultans, and abolished the hated *jizya* (poll-tax on non-Muslims). Early in life he married a Rajput princess who became the mother of his successor, the Emperor Jehangir.

The Rajput clans which had once ruled over the rich Gangetic plains had been driven by earlier Muhammadan invaders to choose between living in subjection to their conquerors and carving out elsewhere a new and poorer dominion. Some had elected to stay where they were, dominating villages in strong communities, and paying such land-tax as the sovereign of the day was able to enforce. Others had migrated, southward and westward, into regions where the country was arid and difficult and attack could at least be resisted. There they remained under chiefs of prominent clans. Their confederacy, headed by the chief of Udaipur, had been vanquished by Babar. But it was Akbar who, first of the Moghals, after capturing the Rajput citadel of Chitor, killing the leader of the defenders, and massacring 30,000 of the country people

who had assisted them, set himself to win Rajput support for his throne. Some chiefs were created dignitaries of the Empire. Some gave wives to the Emperor. But the clans of Mewar never submitted to him.

Employing in his State and army men of all creeds, and holding that, to use his own words, "a monarch should ever be intent on conquest, otherwise his neighbours rise in arms against him," Akbar gradually extended his dominion in all directions until it covered all the provinces of Northern India including Kashmir, Sind and Orissa, Khandesh in the Deccan, and Afghanistan from Kabul southwards. But the mountain country west of the Indus remained independent, Akbar's soldiers simply endeavouring to keep open the passes. The boundary of his empire at the time of his death reached the west coast between Guzerat and Bombay, but in that direction included conquests which had hardly been assimilated. In Rajputana too and elsewhere there were chiefs and tribes whose allegiance was uncertain. Yet it is true that Akbar in his forty years of warfare united under one organised government Hindus and Muslims, Rajputs and Afghans, the numerous races and tribes of Upper India.

His army consisted mainly of irregular contingents raised and commanded by autonomous chiefs or by *mansabdars* (place-holders). His empire was largely composed of protected States, the chiefs of which furnished contingents in time of war and paid tribute more or less regularly. But the mansabdars, or commanders of levies of horsemen, were the backbone of the army, for small reliance was placed on infantry and artillery, the guns being very inferior. Chiefs and mansabdars were expected to provide their commands with all necessities, but drill and uniformity in dress or arms were not exacted. Ordinarily the Emperor allowed his camps to be encumbered with much superfluous equipage; but on occasion he would dispense with all imperial pomp and travel lightly. Supplies were provided by large markets marching with the camps, conducted by the wandering Banjaras, who then and long after were the commissariat of Indian armies. Mansabdars of the higher grades were known as Amirs or Omrah (nobles). Akbar generally paid all mansabdars by cash salaries. He disliked the alternative system of granting them *jagirs*, revenue-free fiefs, as *jagirdars*, holders of "jagirs," were apt to seek independence.

The organisation of the Empire established by Akbar will be described in a subsequent chapter. Here it suffices to say

that the Emperor himself was absolute master, heir and disposer of all his subjects. All institutions derived their sanction from his will and pleasure. As general, statesman and ruler he shone pre-eminent. His great qualities and personal force, his originality, his untiring ambition, dazzled and compelled his multitudinous subjects. His interests were many and varied. Like many of the old Sultans of Delhi, he devoted great attention to building and architecture. The deserted palace-city of Fatihpur Sikri and its noble "Gate of Victory" still proclaim the glories of his reign. Although unable to read, he was believed to have mastered the contents of many books; and liberally patronising letters, he collected an enormous library of manuscripts, among which were Persian translations of Sanskrit epics prepared by his orders. In religion he was profoundly interested. His son had declared that "never for one moment did he forget God." Originally a Sunni Muslim, he studied not only the ancient faiths of India, but also the Christianity taught by the Portuguese Jesuits whom he received at his Court. Finally he rejected Islam and promulgated a new "Divine Monotheism" which attracted no support.

Physically he was as strong and active as his grandfather Babar; but he suffered from a kind of epilepsy which at times plunged him into melancholy and drove him to seek relief in field sports. He was a splendid horseman and shot, willing and eager in all circumstances to risk his life.

His great career closed in gloom. His eldest son, Prince Salim, afterwards the Emperor Jehangir, rebelled and procured the atrocious murder of Abul Fazl, his father's trusted minister. After this father and son were never really reconciled. Two other sons had already died of "delirium tremens." Akbar did not reduce to submission all the Muslim kingdoms of the Deccan or the Portuguese on the western coast, whose artillery was far superior to his own. At sea he was powerless. Yet when he died in October 1605, at the age of sixty-two, he had organised and welded together a mighty dominion. His obsequies were hurried and perfunctory. Only his successor, Jehangir, and a few other persons wore mourning, all resuming their ordinary garb before sunset. Eighty-six years later his remains were stolen from his splendid tomb at Sikandra, near Agra. They were burnt; but his fame is immortal.

III

THE MOGHAL EMPIRE FROM 1605 TO 1707

AKBAR was succeeded by his son Jehangir, who, after repressing a rebellion of his son Prince Khusru, reigned from 1605 to 1627; and Jehangir was succeeded by his son Shah Jehan, who reigned from 1628 to 1659. Jehangir continued his father's tolerant and prudent policy. Although notoriously a drunkard and violent in temper, susceptible moreover to the intrigues of his queen Nur Mahal and her brother, he was a capable ruler. His son Prince Khurram rebelled, and was in rebellion when Jehangir died. Prince Khurram then, after wholesale executions of his male relatives, became Emperor under the name of Shah Jehan. Although born of a Rajput mother, he was a stricter Muslim than either his father or grandfather. His orthodoxy was fortified by the influence of his favourite wife Mumtaz Mahal, the mother of fourteen of his children, who lies by his side at Agra in the glorious mausoleum which he erected to do her honour.

Although generally tolerant to his Hindu subjects, Shah Jehan was subject to fits of fanatical zeal, and in 1632 determined to stop the building of Hindu temples, giving orders that everywhere those under construction should be cast down. It is reported that in the district of Benares alone 76 temples were destroyed. In spite of this aberration, Shah Jehan was a wise ruler. He chose his ministers with discrimination, looked after his finances himself and endeavoured to enforce equitable and effective administration. He dazzled his people by gorgeous display and was certainly the most popular of his house. But in 1631 he lost his beloved Mumtaz Mahal; and as he grew old he devoted himself to sensual pleasures, leaving his empire to be administered by others and fought over by his four sons. The fight was fierce; and the prize fell to the third son Aurangzeb, a man of thirty-eight, after a furious battle at Samugarh near Agra with the forces of Dara, the eldest son, who was strongly supported by a great Rajput contingent. Aurangzeb then imprisoned his father, who survived in comfortable captivity for another seven years. Proclaiming himself Emperor on May 26, 1659, Aurangzeb assumed the title of Alamgir,[1] and four months later ordered the unfortunate Dara to execution. Another brother shared

[1] World-conqueror.

the same fate in the following year, and a third brother was driven from the country.

Aurangzeb owed his success to his established reputation as a cool, courageous soldier. In 1647 his father had sent him to establish the imperial authority in Balkh and Badakshan, once the dominions of Babar and recently recovered for his descendants. Aurangzeb, however, finding those regions untenable, had restored them to the Uzbegs, and had led the imperial forces back to Kabul with considerable loss but with coolness and judgment. Again, he had commanded two unsuccessful expeditions for the recovery of Kandahar and had proved himself a steady and intrepid leader. In the middle of a battle with the Uzbegs, at the hour of evening prayer, although under fire, he had calmly dismounted and discharged his religious duties. The strictest of Muslims, he possessed all the courage of his forefathers Akbar and Babar. During the battle of Samugarh at a critical moment he had ordered the legs of his elephant to be chained together in order that retreat might be rendered impossible. The French doctor Bernier, who saw much of his court, calls him " a versatile and rare genius, a consummate statesman and a great king." Yet his reign was a long tragedy.

In the first place, to his ruin, he reversed the tolerant and liberal policy bequeathed by Akbar. Obsessed with fanatical zeal, in the name of Islam he persecuted the Hindu majority of his subjects; he destroyed their temples; he revived the poll-tax on non-Muslims.

The strongest indictment of his policy is contained in the following protest addressed to him by an unknown Hindu:

" Such were the benevolent intentions of your ancestors [Akbar, Jehangir, Shah Jehan]. While they pursued those great and generous principles, wheresoever they directed their steps, conquest and prosperity went before them; and then they reduced many countries to their obedience. During your Majesty's reign, many have been alienated from the Empire, and further loss of territory must follow, since devastation and rapine now universally prevail without restraint. Your subjects are trampled under foot, and every province of your Empire is impoverished; depopulation spreads, and difficulties accumulate. If your Majesty places any faith in these books by distinction called divine, you will there be instructed that God is the God of all mankind, not the God of the Muhammadans alone. The Pagan and the Mussalman are equally in His presence. Distinctions of colour are of His ordination.

It is He who gives existence. In your temples, to His name the voice is raised in prayer; in a house of images, when the bell is shaken, still He is the object of adoration. To vilify the religion or the customs of other men is to set at naught the pleasure of the Almighty. . . . In fine, the tribute you demand from the Hindus is repugnant to justice; it is equally foreign from good policy, and it must impoverish the country; moreover, it is an innovation and an infringement of the Laws of Hindostan."

But all such words fell on deaf ears, and although Aurangzeb did not disdain marriage with Rajput princesses, his bitter and relentless fanaticism led inevitably to Rajput rebellion. Rajputs had fought stoutly for his predecessors since the days of Akbar.

In the second place Aurangzeb's cold and suspicious nature, his asceticism and frugal simplicity, were repugnant to the majority of his subjects who admired the profuse splendour and display of his forefathers.

In the third place his determination to carry on to a finish the subjugation of the Muslim sultans of the Deccan, which had been begun by his predecessors Akbar and Shah Jehan, involved him in constant war. The Kings of Bijapur and Golkonda had remained unsubdued; and the fact that these potentates were Shias, and therefore in his opinion heretics, was sufficient to fire the bigotry of Aurangzeb. After prolonged and weary efforts, he succeeded in crushing both potentates, but at the cost of gravely weakening the whole structure of his Empire and affording golden opportunities to the most dangerous of his foes the Maratha, Sivaji.

Maharashtra, the home of the Marathas, is that part of the Deccan which is bisected by the western Ghats and extends from the Satpura Hills on the north to Goa on the south. On the east it is approximately bounded by the Vardha River, and on the west by the sea.[1] The Konkan is that portion of Maharashtra which lies between the Ghats and the sea, a narrow strip of rugged country untraversed by roads in Aurangzeb's days and largely covered by forest jungle. The remaining portion is the Deshast or hilly tableland which lies to the east of the Ghats. The features of Maharashtra account largely for the physical characteristics of the Marathas, who are sturdy, laborious and persevering, Hindus by religion and mainly agriculturists by profession. Spiritually they are directed by Brahmans of various sects, of which the most

[1] Grant Duff's *History of the Marathas* (Edwardes), pp. 3–4 (*n.*).

notable is the Konkanasth or Chitpavan. These, by reason of their capacity and ambition, have played a prominent part in history. There are also Rajputs and Vaish, representatives of the military and mercantile castes; but the large majority of Marathas are Kunbis, who belong to the servile class. Others spring from the intermixed progeny of various castes, and each caste is liberally subdivided.

Marathas generally are descended to a considerable extent from the original inhabitants of Maharashtra, and early in the seventeenth century were subjects of the Muslim Sultans of the Deccan, speaking a vernacular dialect founded on Sanskrit, producing occasionally ascetics and poets who dealt with religious subjects. Politically they were disunited and therefore impotent. Frequently they stood in array against each other, fighting for one or other of their Muslim sovereigns. Their country was practically divided between Bijapur and Ahmadnagar. Both before and after Moghal invasion of the Deccan, Marathas fought as free companions, sometimes for one Muslim power and sometimes for another.

Sivaji was the son of one of these free companions, and was born in May 1627, eight years after the birth of Aurangzeb. As a child he fell much under Brahman influence and took pleasure in hearing tales gathered from the Hindu epics. He detested all Muhammadans, regarding them as foreign tyrants. Bold and adventurous by nature, he was content to leave reading and writing to Brahmans and grew up a good archer, marksman and rider. From the age of sixteen he began to talk of becoming an independent ruler; and gradually gathering round him bands of his brother Marathas, he began operations as a robber chief. He was singularly successful and, going on to attack Muslim forts, at last contrived the destruction of a force sent against him by the King of Bijapur. At a conference before the engagement he slew Afzal Khan the general with his own hand, and by guerrilla tactics subsequently baffled an army sent to the Deccan by Aurangzeb. His power increased rapidly. His aim was independent sovereignty.

In June 1674 at his fortress of Raigarh, Sivaji was invested by a Brahman from Benares, the sacred city of the Hindus, with the sacred thread which marked his formal admission to the Kshatriya caste. He was then crowned and anointed as Raja, after the manner of ancient Kshatriya kings. Afterwards he availed himself of Aurangzeb's entanglement in hostilities with the wild Afghan tribes on the north-west frontier to acquire territory in the far south; and when he died, in 1680,

he had established a dominion which consisted partly of *swaraj* districts[1] governed by the Raja, and partly of a right to levy blackmail in the shape of *chaut*, one-fourth of the ordinary land-tax, on territories belonging to other powers, together with, in certain cases, *sardeshmukhi*, an additional 10 per cent. Such exactions entailed the maintenance of intricate accounts; and as the warrior Marathas despised letters, they were entirely dependent on their Brahmans for their financial arrangements.

The government of the swaraj rested with the Raja and a council of eight Brahman ministers, of whom the chief was the Peishwa or prime minister. Over the various districts into which this territory was divided were officers supported by eight principal assistants who dealt with correspondence and accounts. Revenue assessment was made on the crops, the State taking two-fifths of the out-turn. Dr. Fryer, an eye-witness, says that taxes were collected with extreme rigour and brutality. But, in spite of this feature of his rule, Sivaji's success, his religious tendencies, his reverence for Brahmans, made him popular among his Hindu subjects. Even Muhammadans respected some qualities of their redoubtable adversary. For while the famous Maratha was a consummate guerrilla leader, and did not scruple to attack caravans and appropriate property, he would allow no harm to mosques, or to copies of the Koran, or to any woman. When unprotected Muhammadan women were captured by his men, they were guarded carefully until their friends redeemed them with a suitable ransom. Female followers were not allowed in Sivaji's armies. Discipline was strictly maintained; and death was the penalty for disobedience or grave neglect of duty. Nevertheless the prime object of the Maratha soldiers was plunder. When a town or village was sacked, copper money, brass and copper vessels, the property of the lower orders, went to the finders; articles of gold and silver, jewels, valuable stuffs, were by rule to be given up to officers and made over to the Government.

"The territory and treasures which Sivaji acquired," says Grant Duff, "were not so formidable to the Muhammadans as the example he set, the system and habits he introduced, and the spirit he infused. . . . To sum up, let us contrast his craft, pliancy and humility with his boldness, firmness and ambition; his power of inspiring enthusiasm while he showed the coolest attention to his own interests; the dash of a partisan

[1] Literally "districts held in independent sovereignty." The word "swaraj" comes down from Sanskrit literature.

adventurer with the order and economy of a statesman; and lastly, the wisdom of his plans, which raised the despised Hindus to sovereignty and brought about their own accomplishment, when the hand that formed them was low in the dust."

Aurangzeb was slow to realise the quality of Sivaji. At one time his generals succeeded in persuading the Maratha to agree to surrender a number of strongholds and to do homage at Delhi. But when Sivaji appeared in the Emperor's hall of audience, he was allowed to stand unnoticed among third-class mansabdars. Furious at such treatment, he quitted the presence without taking ceremonious leave; and escaping from Delhi, concealed in a hamper, he reoccupied all his forts. Shortly afterwards the Emperor acknowledged him as a Raja; but the concession came too late. Sivaji was for life Aurangzeb's implacable enemy. When in 1680 death removed the Maratha, Aurangzeb admitted that his foe was a great captain, but persisted in underrating the fighting qualities of the race from which Sivaji had sprung. The Emperor sent his sons to lay waste the Konkan; but the guerrilla tactics of the Marathas under Sivaji's son Sambhaji completely baffled the imperial forces.

At last, in 1690, after taking the field himself, Aurangzeb captured Sambhaji, who scornfully rejected an offer of pardon coupled with the condition of turning Mussulman, and was put to an ignominious death. But this only goaded the Marathas to further and bitterer resistance. They decoyed, baffled and slaughtered the Emperor's troops, declining to fight except when they themselves chose, laughing at his heavy cavalry and matchlockmen who, as Bernier says, squatted on the ground, resting their pieces on a wooden fork which they carried on their backs, "terribly afraid of burning their eyelashes or beards, and above all lest some 'jin' or evil spirit should cause the musket to burst." The burning sun, the depressing monsoon-seasons, the intrigues and luxury of the Imperial Court, had done their work on the descendants of those who had followed Babar from Kabul and found no obstacle too hard to overcome. The fanatical folly of Aurangzeb had antagonised most of the Rajputs who had fought so stoutly for Akbar and Shah Jehan. The sturdy Marathas, caring nothing for comfort or luxury, fighting among their own hills and jungles, camped at pleasure round the grand army of the Empire, carting off supplies, carrying off elephants, plundering ammunition-wagons, harassing their enemies by night attacks. Tropical rains added to the discomfort of

the imperial troops. Once at midnight a river flooded the Emperor's camp, sweeping thousands away with tents, horses and bullocks. In 1703 a division of his army was surprised on the banks of the Narbada and driven pell-mell into the river.

At last, in 1706, Aurangzeb retreated to Ahmadnagar. Not only were the Marathas more powerful than ever, but the Rajputs were once more in arms, and near Delhi the Jats were in revolt. His own sons were against him. All that was left him was to die. "Carry this creature of dust to the nearest burying-place," he said, "and lay it in the earth without any useless coffin." He expired on March 4, 1707, in the fiftieth year of his reign and the eighty-ninth of his life. He had seen ruin threatening his house. In the south were the Marathas; in the north the Rajputs were bitterly hostile; while in the Punjab had arisen the formidable sect of the Sikhs.

The Sikhs, or disciples, began as Hindu religious reformers. By race they are mostly Jats of the Punjab, belonging to the Indo-Aryan physical type, held in high repute as hardy yeomen, ready either to take up arms or to follow the plough. In religion Jats are Hindus; but some have been converted to Islam.

The founder of Sikhism among the Jats was Nanak a Rajput, a *guru* or teacher who lived from 1469 to 1539. He preached the unity of God, the futility of forms of worship and the unreality of caste distinctions. He left behind him many earnest and admiring disciples, and was succeeded by other gurus. In 1577 Akbar granted to the fourth guru the site of the tank and Golden Temple at Amritsar, thus establishing that place as the religious capital of the Sikhs. Har Gobind, the sixth guru, began the conversion of a religious sect into a military fraternity, and came into conflict with the Emperors Jehangir and Shah Jehan. Tej Bahadur, the ninth guru, after encouraging Hindu resistance to forcible conversion, was executed by order of Aurangzeb on refusal to embrace the creed of Islam. Gobind Singh, the tenth and last guru (1675–1708), organised his brethren into a military power, binding them together by two sacraments which were to be accepted by all the "Khalisa" (pure). The Adi Granth or original Sikh bible had already been dictated by Arjun, the sixth guru. Gobind Singh added a supplementary Granth and invented new names for God, the first the Akal (Immortal), the last the Asipani (the Sword in his Hand), the impersonation and source

of bravery. He commanded Sikhs to adopt the five K's—five attributes the Punjabi names of which begin with the letter K—namely long hair, short drawers, an iron quoit, a small steel dagger and a comb.

Gobind Singh was murdered by an Afghan in 1708; and since his decease the holy Granth has been the spiritual teacher of the Sikhs. As a military power they soon became formidable. They were commanded by a Rajput convert of Gobind's named Banda who, at the head of followers of the guru and a number of lawless men, inflamed by the cruel executions of Gobind's sons by the Moghal commandant of Sirhind, obtained various successes, killed the obnoxious commandant and committed atrocities. At one time Banda was supreme from Delhi to Peshawar. But in 1715 he was captured, was sent to Delhi in a cage and executed with many of his followers. An English eyewitness of the spectacle reported that the Sikhs vied with each other in contempt for death. These incidents, however, belong to a period when the Moghal Empire was waning fast; and before going further, we will briefly examine its relations with its subjects in happier times.

IV

THE MOGHAL EMPIRE AND THE PEOPLE

When Akbar died in 1605 the Moghal Empire dominated Northern India, including Afghanistan and Kashmir, Guzerat and Sind, Orissa and most of modern Bengal. On the south it was bounded by the three remaining Muhammadan kingdoms of the Deccan, Ahmadnagar, Golkonda and Bijapur. Beyond these, in the extreme south of the peninsula, were the territories of various Hindu chieftains who had once owed allegiance to the bygone Vijayanagar Empire.

A century later Aurangzeb was approaching the close of his long life. His empire covered Northern India and most of Afghanistan. It stretched southwards almost to Cape Comorin. It had absorbed the Muslim kingdoms of the Deccan and much of the old Vijayanagar Empire. Yet already signs were manifest that its days were numbered. The Emperor, a bitter proselytiser, had for years been continuously at war in a country containing, as Bernier says, hundreds of Hindus to one Muhammadan. His empire was threatened by a new formidable Hindu power, animated by a nascent national spirit.

The prestige of his armies had much declined. By intemperate fanaticism he had alienated or antagonised the Rajput clans. His Muslim soldiers were ill disciplined; and Bernier wrote that 25,000 French veterans commanded by Condé or Turenne would overcome any number of the Imperial troops. On the sea the Moghal Empire had always been helpless; and along its coasts European maritime Powers were establishing factories and forts. Still, the inheritors of Akbar's glory stood in high repute and maintained considerable order over vast territories.

No priest crowned or anointed the Emperor. The proclamation of his accession was prefaced with the praise of God and the Prophet. After recital of his titles, gold and silver coins were showered among his courtiers, who hailed him as the Khalifa of the age. The essential act of his coronation was the "jalsa" or sitting. The supreme moment arrived when he took his seat on the throne. Emperors from Akbar onwards assumed the title of Khalifa, which had previously been adopted by Sher Shah.

The splendour of the court in its palmy days dazzled the eyes of the populace and of foreign visitors. Sir Thomas Roe tells us that Jehangir on his birthday sat "crosslegged upon a little throne, all clad in diamonds, pearles and rubies, before him a table of gold, on it about fifty pieces of gold plate, . . . his nobilitie about him in their best equipage whom he commanded to drink froliquely, several wines standing by in great flagons." Akbar and Jehangir held royal state at Agra; but Shah Jehan added a new city and palace to Delhi which thenceforth became the capital of the empire.

"Nothing," says Bernier, "can be conceived much more brilliant than the great square in front of the fortress [palace] at the hours when the Amirs, Rajas and Mansabdars repair to the citadel to mount guard or attend the Hall of Audience." In this hall, which still recalls so many vanished splendours, the Emperor, when at headquarters, in order to be seen of his people, sat daily upon the famous throne of Shah Jehan studded with precious stones accumulated from the spoils of conquered kings and the gifts presented by nobles and feudatory chiefs. Gorgeous festivals were held on special anniversaries, when State processions were made to the noble mosque built by Shah Jehan. Elephant-fights provided excitement. Nobles and officers of State vied with each other in costly display. Even Aurangzeb, noted as he was for his simple habits, appreciated the importance of accessibility in the business of an

Eastern monarch, and for many years showed himself constantly to his subjects "high on a throne of royal state."

The Moghal court, however, was mainly a foreign court. The nobles, the governors, the generals who supported it, were largely of Turkish, Afghan or Persian descent. Adventurers from Central Asia came to push their fortunes. The languages spoken were at first Turki and Persian, and later on Persian only. Urdu, or Persianised Hindi, developed gradually as a convenient method of communication between the conquerors and the conquered. Akbar had done his best to promote amity and union between his Muslims and the martial Rajputs. But his policy was less actively pursued by his son and grandson, and was vigorously reversed by Aurangzeb.

Akbar's military system and the position of "mansabdars" and feudal chiefs in his empire have already been described. We now turn to the system of civil administration which he transmitted to his descendants. The Emperor was absolute but was assisted by ministers. His empire contained feudatory States and *subas* (provinces) under subadars (governors). The Subadar was commander-in-chief of his province, which was divided into "sarkars" or districts. District administration was directed toward securing at all times sufficient soldiers and sufficient money. Each district was placed in charge of a *faujdar* or commandant, who was responsible for keeping order and for supplying a local force of untrained infantry. He was assisted by an *amalguzar*, or tax-collector.

In towns, peace and public order were the special care of an officer known as the *kotwal*. He was not only chief officer but chief judge, although judicial officials, known as *kazis*, dealt with questions arising out of Muslim civil law. Despotic power was wielded by faujdars and kotwals under lazy or incompetent subadars. The administration of justice was honeycombed with bribery, and officials generally made the most of fleeting opportunities, for their position was precarious, especially under Aurangzeb, who employed a staff of inspectors working in all provinces of his empire and informing him of all that passed. Theoretically subjects in the provinces could appeal to the Emperor, but ordinarily they made the best of the treatment accorded to them by their local rulers. "Delhi dur ast" ("It is a long way to Delhi"), ran the proverb; and communications were frequently deterrent. Even Akbar could exercise little supervision over distant tracts.

India was then, as she is now, an agricultural country.

The land-revenue, or money equivalent of the State-share of agricultural produce, was and is her fiscal mainstay. Akbar's Hindu finance minister, Raja Todar Mal, building on a foundation laid by the Afghan chief Sher Shah, who expelled Humayun, devised an elaborate method of assessment of crop-outturn based on measurement of land, classification of areas and adjustment of revenue-rates to classified areas. The State dues were theoretically one-third of the average outturn, calculated on the result of ten years' experience. Investigation and calculations were performed by a large staff of officials.

The Government sometimes realised revenue from the tenants through tax-collectors, whose offices were frequently hereditary; at other times it contracted with landholders (*zamindars*) for payment of dues from villages under their protection; and sometimes the Emperor or his Viceroy granted fiefs (*jagirs*) to generals or favourites revenue-free. Tax-collectors often became zamindars; but many of the latter were Rajput chiefs or proprietary communities, who still exercised much authority over the masses. We know that numbers of the Rajas and Rajputs of an earlier generation had abandoned the Gangetic plain for the less fertile lands of Rajputana, where they maintained independence till the time of Akbar. But numbers remained, leaders in their village communities, whom they protected, as best they could, from the invasions, persecutions and exactions of the early Muhammadan conquerors.

During the period of disintegration which immediately preceded the establishment of the Moghal Empire, Rajas and Rajputs recovered much of their pristine power. But then came the days of Babar and Humayun; and at last Akbar, establishing a powerful central government, desired to conciliate, and to recruit soldiers from, the strongest and most national section of his Hindu subjects. Some Rajas were permitted to hold certain villages free of tax; others paid revenue but were allowed special dues at each harvest. Aurangzeb indeed pursued another policy with ruinous effect; but in the Empire's palmy days the position of the Rajput landholders, although frequently assailed by Muslim settlers, Muslim governors or Muslim tax-gatherers, was the best compatible with circumstances. Over the tenants and village labourers they ruled with the authority with which Brahmanism invested them, unless indeed any of these, disgusted with the serfdom decreed to them, sought escape in conversion to Islam. Some zamindars and many jagirdars were Muslims.

The peasants themselves had far less security of tenure and

far less hope of reaping the fruits of their labour than they have in modern times. At the commencement of his reign Jehangir found it necessary to order that the officials of the Crown-lands and the jagirdars should not forcibly take the *ryots*' (tenants') lands and cultivate them on their own account. Bernier states that owing to the tyranny of such persons the ground was, as a rule, only tilled under compulsion, and that no person wished or was able to repair the water-channels. Mr. Moreland holds, no doubt correctly, that the tenants of hereditary zamindars were better off than those of jagirdars, who were ordinarily strangers. Landlords and tenants alike lived in fear of losing their means of livelihood through war, rebellion or the devastating famines which then entailed heavy mortality and enslavement of children.

The peasants themselves and their crops have so far changed but little since the seventeenth century. "The plough and the ox, the millets and the rice, the pulses and the oil-seeds, and the whole traditions of the countryside link the India of to-day with the sixteenth century and with far earlier times in the history of the people." [1] But over many stretches of country the cultivators' means of irrigation are now far superior to those of his far-away ancestors. The present canal system belongs almost entirely to the nineteenth century.

The village labourers were in a hopelessly servile position. It was very difficult for them, when decimated by famine, to obtain the slightest relief either at home or abroad. Travel was often very difficult and prospects of employment were scanty. There were no factories of importance. The production of gold, quicksilver, lead, zinc, was negligible. The output of copper was small; but that of iron was more considerable. Salt was obtained from the Punjab mines and the Sambhar Lake. There were various diamond-fields which absorbed a certain amount of labour, and there was a drift of villagers toward cities and armies. When an Emperor toured or departed on a leisurely campaign, his camp was joined by a host of followers of all kinds as well as by the shopkeepers of his capital. Bernier describes elaborately the organisation of one of Aurangzeb's camps, peopled by a "prodigious and almost incredible multitude." Mr. Moreland concludes that although far less numerous than they are now, the rural masses of these times lived more hardly than they live in these, that a larger proportion of their surplus earnings was absorbed by the State, and that communal expenditure in the shape of

[1] Moreland, *India at the Death of Akbar*, p. 101.

provision of medical or famine relief, education, means of communication, assistance to production, was either non-existent or of a very meagre description.

Industries were largely concentrated in a few towns and cities and more especially at the capital. Bernier tells us that although workshops occupied by skilful artisans did not exist in Delhi city, this was not because there was " any inability in the people to cultivate the arts." In fact Indians made " excellent muskets and fowling-pieces, and such beautiful gold ornaments that it might be doubted if the exquisite workmanship of those articles could be exceeded by any European goldsmith." Want of genius was not the reason why works of superior art were not exhibited in the Delhi shops. The reason was that unless protected by royal patronage, artists and manufacturers were harshly treated and inadequately rewarded. But the Emperors themselves were patrons of art; and in the Imperial palace enclosure special workshops were provided for artificers, one hall for embroiderers, another for goldsmiths, another for painters, another for varnishers in lacquer-work, another for joiners, turners, tailors and shoemakers, another for manufacturers of silk, brocade and fine muslins.

It was such artistic exhibits, combined with a passion for gorgeous display in Imperial and Viceregal courts, which produced on the minds of European travellers an illusory impression of vast wealth. India indeed produced diamonds and other commodities which were eagerly sought for by peoples of foreign countries. She thereby secured a steady influx of the precious metals, so that travellers who viewed her under the influence of economic theories which are now exploded, and observed the display at courts and the time-honoured habit of hoarding gold and silver in circumstances which prevented their employment in reproduction, were apt to form erroneous ideas of her wealth. But if the relation of the income from all commodities to the total numbers of population[1] be considered, and it be remembered that persons employed in producing articles for foreign commerce can only have formed a small fraction of these total numbers, the inference follows that India was even then, although far more sparsely inhabited than she is now, a poor country. Her present great export trade in food-grains, oil-seeds and fibres was non-existent. Her communications were extremely meagre;

[1] Mr. Moreland estimates the population of India in Akbar's days as " at least about 100 millions."

and much land which is now under cultivation was then marsh and jungle. The submontane forests stretched far into the plains.

In the next chapter Indian commerce with Europe in this period will be dealt with. India also possessed export markets in Asia. The products of her looms found their way to Arabia, Burma, the Spice Islands, China and the east coast of Africa. Bernier notices particularly the large quantity of silk stuffs and cotton cloths of every kind manufactured in Bengal. Producers generally would have profited more had they not been so much at the mercy of rulers prone to luxury and display, holding office on precarious tenure.

The professional classes, which have become prominent as the Congress party in modern times, were then represented by clerks, merchants, doctors and minor functionaries at administrative centres. There were no practising lawyers, few secular teachers, no engineers, no journalists. Physicians, artists and authors sought the patronage of the great as the sole avenue to success.

No court meddled with the hosts of ascetics and religious mendicants who subsisted on alms, as they do to-day. Nor, as a rule, did any Government concern itself with the primitive tribes of mountains and forests which are hardly mentioned by cotemporary writers.

The *Ain-i-Akbari*—or Institutes of Akbar—compiled by his minister, Abul Fazl, lay down elaborate methods for the teaching of reading and writing. "Every boy," they say, "ought to read books on morals, arithmetic, agriculture, mensuration, geometry, astronomy, physiognomy, household matters, the rules of government, medicine, logic and history, all of which may be gradually acquired." Injunctions are also given as to the study of Sanskrit. But the incessant wars of Aurangzeb's later years and the numerous troubles of the eighteenth century were as injurious to learning as to every other form of progress.

The Hindu caste system flourished in full vigour in Moghal times. The alliance between the Brahman and the Raja continued throughout countless villages. The authority of each was deeply respected by the masses, in spite of Muslim governors and settlers. Hinduism remained intact, despite a certain leakage of converts to Islam.

Sir Thomas Roe speaks of the "want of Government" in Jehangir's empire. But European travellers generally testify to Indian hospitality and to the tolerant religious policy of

Akbar and Jehangir. "In the Mogol's dominions," wrote Tom Coryat in October 1616, "a Christian may speake much more freely than he can in any other Mahometan country." There is other testimony to the same effect.

If we compare the Moghal Empire in its best days with countries in cotemporary Europe, if we take into account the great size of India, its previous history, its vast distances, its scanty communications, we must admire the vigour, capacity and organising ability of Babar and his immediate descendants. They bequeathed to posterity a great name, some very noble buildings and a system of administration which they inherited from earlier times, developed, and passed on to the British. But their rule was marked by frequent wars of succession which weakened its structure; and, in any case, the strength of that structure depended mainly on the character of a hereditary sovereign. If the Emperor were a puppet, or if there were any doubt as to who was Emperor, strife and confusion distracted the realm.

V

EUROPEAN MARITIME ENTERPRISE

THE rulers of Indian kingdoms and empires had been so far accustomed to look for invasion solely from the land. But when on May 20, 1498, the Portuguese Vasco da Gama anchored his three ships off a small village eight miles north of the western port of Calicut, he began a process of turning India's flank from Europe by way of the sea which was destined profoundly to alter the whole course of her history.

The Portuguese had in 1385 won their own country from the Moors after a hard struggle of two and a half centuries. For the next hundred years their history was one of strenuous efforts to discover the sea-route to the East. These efforts received an added stimulus when the Turks conquered Constantinople in A.D. 1453. Existing trade-routes between Europe and the East had then fallen into Muslim hands. The great European markets were crying out for spices and pepper, for in Northern Europe animals, under the prevailing system of agriculture, could be killed for meat only in the summer and autumn, and provision for the rest of the year was made by preserving the meat killed in these particular seasons. Preservation was largely by "powdering," which process

involved the use of a quantity of mixed spices. A necessary demand was largely increased by the taste of consumers. Meat, poultry, game, fish, fruit and even bread were flavoured to an excessive extent. In England there was a guild of pepperers even in the reign of Henry II; and in 1345 membership thereof was limited to "pepperers and spicerers." Spices from the Indian seas originally reached England by way of Egypt and Venice or Genoa. But to return to Portugal.

The original director of the Portuguese expeditions which laboriously felt their way down the African coast, with intent to discover a new way to India, was Prince Henry the Navigator, grandson of our own John of Gaunt. He wished to free the trade of the East from Muslim control and to inaugurate a new crusade against the Infidels from whom Portugal had suffered so much. He devoted his life to this task and "never gave over his endeavours of discovering till he discovered the celestial Jerusalem which happened the 13th of November 1463, three and forty years after Madeira had first been descried."[1] His spirit continued to inspire the bold mariners who pursued the quest, until in 1487 the Cape of Good Hope was rounded by Bartholomew Diaz.

Ten years later Vasco da Gama, with three ships, of a burden from 60 to 150 tons, and 160 men, sailed in pomp from Lisbon, and, after a voyage of eleven months, on May 20, 1498, cast anchor off Calicut. He set himself to displace the "Moors," as he called the Arab carriers of the Indian seas. He was well received by the Hindu ruler of Calicut; but after some ineffective bargaining and a quarrel, started on his return journey on August 29, 1498. He finally reached home in August 1499, with only fifty-five survivors of the expedition and two ships. Arab merchants still monopolised Indian traffic, bearing it through the Red Sea and Persian Gulf to the markets of Egypt, Arabia and Persia. From the dawn of history they had done this; and now the fruits of their enterprise were garnered by the conquering Turk.

In A.D. 1500 a larger fleet was despatched from Portugal under Pedro Alvarez Cabral, who established a factory at Calicut and entered into relations with neighbouring Hindu rulers, but made war against Muslims and against the Arab Mapilla or Moplah merchants of Malabar. Next the King of Portugal, fortified by Papal Bulls, appointed a Viceroy; and the second Viceroy, Affonso de Albuquerque (1509–1515), decided to establish a Portuguese maritime empire, both by

[1] *Purchas His Pilgrimes.*

colonisation and by conquest, which would give to Portugal command of sea-borne traffic with the East. Fortresses must be secured at strategical points which would shelter soldiers and protect ships while refitting. Factories (trading-settlements) with small forts were necessary at other places. Colonies were required, in order that by marriages with the women of the country wastage of life might be repaired.

In 1510 Albuquerque, bent on these designs, effectively occupied the island of Goa, then the principal harbour of the Bijapur Kingdom. He governed it through his countrymen, but enrolled sepoys (Indian soldiers) commanded by Indian officers. He abolished *sati* (self-immolation of widows), then a common Hindu practice, on Portuguese territory. In 1511 he captured Malacca, where he built and garrisoned a fortress which remained Portuguese until, after 130 years, it passed into the hands of the Dutch. He explored the Spice Islands. In the Red Sea he occupied Socotra, but failed to take Aden. In the Persian Gulf he captured and fortified Ormuz, which was held by Portugal till 1622. Soon after this final achievement Albuquerque died. "He has only gone," said the lower orders in Goa, "because God needed him to fight battles elsewhere." Even the King of Portugal, who had ordered him to be superseded by a personal opponent, would not allow his body to be removed to Portugal, saying that as long as Albuquerque's bones rested in Goa, "India was safe." Afterwards when required to give them up, the Goanese refused until menaced with dire penalties by a Papal Bull.

Albuquerque was passionate, pitiless and cruel, like many prominent men of his age, but easy of access to his Goanese subjects, and in cool moments anxious to do justice. "I am known all over India," he told his King, "as a man of my word; if I send for a Muhammadan from anywhere, he comes and demands no security." He was a born ruler. "Clear-headed, always accessible, he did his work himself; he might inadvertently be unjust, but he never allowed subordinates to rob or oppress; he knew his own mind and never let his judgment be warped by fear or favour." [1]

Other Viceroys succeeded Albuquerque. Portuguese lordship of the ocean was established from Mozambique to Malacca. From Malacca trade to the Far East was organised in Portuguese interests. Commercial agencies were started at Macao in China, in Japan and in the principal islands of the Malay Archipelago. From the entrepots at Goa and Cochin on the

[1] Whiteway, *Rise of the Portuguese Power.*

west coast of India, vessels carrying textiles and merchandise went eastward and returned with spices and "China goods." Vessels that went westward bore always pepper, shipped by order of the State, and private merchandise. So frequently were ships overloaded that many were lost on the homeward voyage. In 1547 the sea-borne trade of Vijayanagar passed by treaty into Portuguese hands. In 1570 Goa was besieged by a large army of the confederate Sultans of the Deccan; but after ten months the siege was raised. The displaced Arab traders could only wage an intermittent warfare which their adversaries stigmatised as piracy. The Goa Viceroys, confident in naval power, declared trade on certain sea-routes and in certain goods to be a State monopoly held for the benefit of their own sovereign. Outside these limits licences were necessary. Unlicensed ships would be prizes of war. Even Akbar in sending ships from Guzerat to the Red Sea obtained permits from the Portuguese.

The question naturally arises, How was a position of so much power attained? It is true that the Portuguese were better armed than their Indian opponents, but the cannon of these days were dangerous to friends as well as to foes; and bombardments were sometimes stopped as more injury was done to the assailant ships from recoil than to the enemy from balls. The real explanation of the Portuguese successes was that for long their soldiers and sailors were picked men inspired by a courageous spirit of strenuous adventure.

But the hardihood and enterprise which achieved so much were often marred by shocking cruelty; and after Albuquerque's death, the Portuguese under a fanatical king embarked on an insane attempt to force natives of India to adopt Christianity. In 1560 the Inquisition began its abominable work at Goa. It blasted and withered there as elsewhere. Moreover, Albuquerque's system of colonisation was a failure. The Portuguese half-castes were far inferior to their forbears. Finally, the absorption of Portugal in Spain in 1580 dragged the former country into the quarrels of the latter. Spain's hands were full already, and the population and resources of her new dependency were insufficient to maintain a distant maritime empire which was speedily disputed by the Protestant Powers of Northern Europe. Assailed by Holland and England, the Portuguese power in India, which was entirely dependent upon predominance at sea and was largely upheld by a debased domiciled community, declined rapidly.

Bernier, writing in the latter half of the seventeenth cen-

tury, contrasts in stinging terms the Portuguese of his day in India with those who in former times had been distinguished for " courage, generosity, zeal for religion, immensity of wealth and the splendour of their exploits." Gradually most of the Portuguese settlements fell into Dutch or English hands. At last the treaty of 1661, which gave Bombay to Charles II as part of the dowry of Catherine of Braganza, bound England to defend the few remaining Portuguese possessions against the Dutch.

The latter, in the course of their struggle with Spain, had decided to appropriate the great Indian spice-trade. Their main objective was Malacca and the islands of the Malay Archipelago. In the closing years of the sixteenth century associations of Dutch merchants sent expeditions to Java; and in 1602 these associations united in a Dutch East India Company which established Batavia in Java as the capital of the Dutch East Indies and gradually asserted Dutch supremacy in the Spice Islands. In 1640 the English East India Company was informed by one of its Presidents in India that the Portuguese were in a " most miserable predicament, Malacca and Ceylon besieged; their galleons fired; their soldiers decayed; themselves disheartened; all precipitating them, except sudden and ample succours from Europe reinforce them, even to utter ruin, whilst the insolent Dutch domineer in all places, styling themselves already Kings of the Indian Seas."

Both Malacca and Ceylon fell to the Hollanders, but on the coasts of India their settlements were insignificant. The Spice Islands seemed to them the more profitable acquisition.

Our own East India Company was formed under a charter granted by Queen Elizabeth on December 31, 1600, entitled " A privilege for fifteen years granted by Her Majesty to certain adventurers for the discovery of the trade for the East Indies." For twenty years English merchants had been striving to secure a share in the Indian trade, and in 1581 a syndicate of London merchants had been granted a monopoly of English commerce with Turkey. Funds had been found for sending certain merchants to explore the possibilities of trade with India through Asia Minor and Persia. Two of these merchants, John Newbery and Ralph Fitch, set off furnished with letters of introduction from Queen Elizabeth to the Emperor Akbar (described therein as King of Cambay). It is not clear if the letters were actually presented. Newbery died on his return journey; but Fitch came back to England, after an

absence of eight years, and told his story. A Levant Company was formed for the promotion of trade by land with India through the Turkish dominions, but no substantial attempt was made to act on its charter. With the defeat of the Spanish Armada it had become evident that the future of trade with India lay on the all-round water route.

The East India Company's first charter was secured by Sir Thomas Smythe, a great London merchant and member of the former Levant Company, who, with other merchants, including the Lord Mayor, sent round the beadle with the Company's subscription-book. After some trouble, capital amounting to £68,323 was raised, and a fleet of four ships was fitted out which under Captain James Lancaster visited Achin in Sumatra and established a factory at Bantam in Java. It then returned to England.

A second fleet visited the Spice Islands, but experienced much opposition from the Dutch. A third fleet detached a ship to Surat, then the principal Moghal port on the west coast. It was desired to establish a factory there by treaty with the Emperor. William Hawkins, a nephew of the great Sir John, landed at Surat and went up-country as the Company's envoy, presenting himself on April 16, 1609, before the Emperor Jehangir at Agra, with whom he was able to converse in Turki. But he was bitterly opposed by Portuguese Jesuits at the Imperial court and accomplished nothing. He discovered, moreover, that English enterprise was hopeless as long as the Portuguese fleet could blockade the coast at will. The situation altered when Captain Thomas Best with his ships the *Dragon* and the *Hosiander*, on December 23, 1612, signally defeated a Portuguese squadron. A factory (trading-settlement) was established at Surat by permission of Jehangir with subordinate agencies inland. More English naval triumphs followed; and with the aid of a Persian land-force Ormuz in the Persian Gulf was captured in 1622. For some time the English continued hostilities with the Portuguese; and peace was not concluded till 1633. Long before then the Surat factory and its subordinate agencies under a President in Council had become the Company's presidency on the west coast of India.

With the sanction of King James I, the Company had despatched Sir Thomas Roe, an accomplished courtier and traveller, a friend of Henry Prince of Wales and Elizabeth of Bohemia, as official representative of the English nation, to the court of the Emperor Jehangir, in order to negotiate a permanent

treaty authorising the opening of factories on the coast and at inland places of commercial importance. Roe arrived at Agra in November 1615; and after a long stay left India in February 1619, arriving in England in September of the same year. He obtained two firmans or imperial orders, one from Jehangir and the other from Prince Khurram, afterwards the Emperor Shah Jehan, directing that the English should be well treated and allowed free trade. Roe advocated a forward policy on the sea, but was strongly against land-fortification or the maintenance of a military force, holding that "a war and traffic are incompatible." He saw no serious obstacles to English progress. The Portuguese were on the downward path; and the justice of the Moghals was "generally good to strangers"; the authorities were "not rigorous except in searching for things to please." Roe served his employers well. From his time Englishmen were treated with increasing respect and gradually ousted the Portuguese from any position of influence at the Imperial court.

In 1609 the East India Company had been by a second charter re-endowed with the Indian trade in perpetuity, "unless such an arrangement should prove unprofitable to the realm." In 1635 Charles I infringed this monopoly by granting a licence for trade in the East to Endymion Porter, who was financed by a Sir William Courteen or Courten, a great London merchant. Courten's Association established a settlement at Assada in Madagascar, and were called the Assada Merchants. Business competition between this Association and the East India Company was terminated by their union in 1649; and in 1657 Cromwell granted the united Company a new charter under which they raised their first permanent joint-stock. They were allowed "to fortify and plant" in any of their settlements and to transport colonists thither. Ninety-one new factors and merchants were despatched to the East. By an important charter granted by Charles II in 1661, the Company received special privileges. The joint-stock principle was recognised by giving each member one vote for every £500 subscribed by him to the Company's stock. The Company was to have "power and command" over their fortresses and were allowed to appoint "governors" and councillors. The governor and council of each principal factory were empowered to administer justice to all their subordinates. The Company was to be able to send ships-of-war, men or ammunition, for the security and defence of their fortresses, to seize unlicensed intruders, "interlopers," and

send them to England, to punish persons in their employment for offences, and in the event of appeal, to send them to England as prisoners to receive punishment there. It was understood that justice would be administered in their settlements according to English law. In the same year Charles II received Bombay from Portugal as part of the Infanta Catherine's dowry and engaged to defend the Portuguese from the Dutch.

In 1611 Captain Hippon had founded a factory for the Company at Masulipatam on the east or Coromandel coast. In 1640 Francis Day, a member of the Masulipatam factory council, had procured from a petty Hindu Raja a narrow strip of land about 230 miles to the south of Masulipatam with permission to build a fortified factory thereon. Round the guns of this factory when built grew up the "White" and "Black" towns of Madras, which was declared a Presidency in 1653. Striking northward too from Masulipatam, the Company's servants had tried settlements at Hariharpur in the Mahanadi Delta and at Balasore in Orissa. Neither flourished; but Gabriel Boughton, surgeon of one of the Company's ships, who lived for some time as physician at the court of the Subadar of Bengal, had procured permission for the establishment of an English factory at Hughli, where the Dutch and Portuguese were already settled.

Since the treaty of 1633 with the Portuguese the Company's servants on the western coast had built a large number of coasting vessels in local shipyards and were driving a lucrative trade along the shores of Western India. But Surat had been found an inadequate centre; it did not possess a good harbour, and by land was exposed to Maratha attack. It was largely at the mercy of the Moghal Governor of the town, who levied extortionate dues. Eventually the Company's head-quarters on the west coast were moved to Bombay, which was granted to them by a charter of 1668, to be held of the Crown "in free and common soccage" for the annual rent of £10. The Company could appoint a governor whose powers would be of the widest. They could employ such king's officers and soldiers as might be on the island of Bombay, and willing to serve them. As the next chapter shows, it was becoming increasingly manifest that the continued prosperity of the Company's business was conditional on the ability of its servants to defend themselves.

By a charter of 1683 the Company were permitted to make peace and war with non-Christian nations. By a charter of 1686, through Sir Josiah Child, their most prominent and

powerful member, they obtained another charter allowing them to coin any species of money usually coined by native princes, strengthening their hands against "interlopers," and, in Child's words, forming them "into a sovereign State." But with the Revolution of 1688 their prospects in England clouded.

Their prosperity had greatly increased since the Restoration. As Macaulay says, the taste for the spices, the tissues and the jewels of the East had become "stronger day by day." [1] Tea from China had become a great article of import; and saltpetre was required for gunpowder. The value of the Company's stock had greatly risen. Their monopoly was regarded with envy; and it was only after a keen contest and profuse bribery that Child managed to obtain further charters in 1693 and 1694. But his opponents raised the constitutional question whether the Crown could grant a monopoly of trade without the consent of Parliament; and although the Privy Council decided in favour of the Crown, the decision was stultified by a resolution passed by the House of Commons on January 11, 1694, to the effect that "all subjects of England have equal rights to trade to the East Indies unless prohibited by Act of Parliament." Thus it was that "the question whether the trading privileges of the East India Company should be continued was removed from the Council-chamber to Parliament, and the period of control by Act of Parliament over the affairs of the Company began." [2]

In 1698, under Act of Parliament a rival association of "interlopers" and other merchants was chartered as a joint-stock company "trading to the East Indies"; but the old Company contributed £315,000 toward its authorised capital of £2,000,000. Bitter rivalry, however, ensued in England and India with ruinous results to both sides. In 1702 a preliminary instrument of union was signed whereby an amalgamation commenced which was completed in 1708. From that year onward there was but one East India Company, represented by a Court of Directors and a general Court of Proprietors. For the success of trade with India it was necessary to have one association only, powerful enough to treat with Indian princes, to enforce discipline among its servants and to resist European rivals and the pirates who infested the Indian Ocean. No Western nation could afford to support more than one such body.

[1] *History of England*, vol. iv, p. 132.
[2] Ilbert, *Government of India*, p. 27.

VI

THE DISSOLUTION OF THE MOGHAL EMPIRE

Sir Thomas Roe had advised the East India Company of his day that it was "an error" to affect garrisons and land-wars in India! A military-commercial policy had been "the beggaring of the Portugal" and the mistake of the Dutch. But Roe wrote in an age when organised government prevailed generally both in the Moghal Empire and in the Muslim Sultanates of the Deccan. Half a century later Sivaji and his Marathas were repulsed with difficulty from the gates of the English factory at Surat; and in 1677 they passed close to Madras. Aurangzeb was exhausting the energies of his empire in crushing the Kings of Bijapur and Golkonda, who would otherwise have been his natural allies against the insurgent Maratha power. Ordered authority was manifestly weakening, and however averse the English settlers might be from taking to arms, necessity was gradually compelling them to consider whether salvation lay in any other course. From Bombay Gerald Aungier, Governor from 1669 to 1677, reported to the Directors that the "justice and respect wherewith strangers in general, and especially those of our nation, were wont to be treated, is quite laid aside; the name of the honourable Company and the English nation, through our long patient suffering of wrong, is become slighted; our complaints, remonstrances, paper protests, and threatenings are laughed at. . . . In violent distempers violent cures only are successful—the times now require you to manage your general commerce with your swords in your hands."

From Hughli in Bengal, the Company's agent, a sturdy Englishman named Job Charnock, reported in 1678: "The whole kingdom is lying in a very miserable feeble condition, the great ones plundering and robbing the inferior."

The Company, acting on recent charters, decided to assert full jurisdiction within the boundaries of their settlements, to fortify freely, coin money and collect customs. They began to enlist a native militia in order to protect their property and themselves. They instructed their President and Council at Bombay to "establish such a politie of civil and military power and such a large revenue as may be the foundation of a large well-grounded sure English dominion in India for all time to come."

Factories on the west coast were subordinate to Sir John Child, the Governor of Bombay, and to his council of senior merchants.

Factories on the east side of India were subordinate to the President and Council at Madras or Fort St. George. We have already traced the Company's merchants to Hughli, a port in the estuary of the Ganges. From there they had worked upstream and founded stations at Kasimbazar, near Murshidabad, the capital of the Nawab-Nazim (Muslim Viceroy), and farther north at the ancient town of Patna, famous for trade in saltpetre, opium and raw silk. Annoyed by the exactions of the Viceroy of Bengal and by generally disquieting news, advised to secure a fortress in Bengal, the Directors, with the consent of James II, despatched an expedition to capture Chittagong, then, as now, a harbour of considerable importance, holding that "we have no remedy left, but either to desert our trade, or to draw the sword His Majesty hath entrusted us with, to vindicate the rights and honour of the English nation in India." Three men-of-war and three frigates were despatched from England carrying six companies of English soldiers under a Captain Nicholson. These were to be joined by the Company's other vessels off Bengal and Madras. The Subadar of Bengal was to be asked either to pay £620,000 damages "for this great fleet and force" as well as for obstruction to the Company's trade, or to give up Chittagong and allow the Company's settlements to proceed "upon the old privileges." The expedition, however, was a failure. Job Charnock and the English settlers were driven from Hughli to Satanati, farther down the Ganges, and after making a persistent attempt to settle there, were compelled to withdraw for fifteen months to Madras. By order of the Emperor, the factories of the Company were everywhere attacked and Bombay itself was besieged. The situation was only saved by English operations at sea. From Bombay Child directed free capture of Muslim shipping, thus arresting Muslim commerce and pilgrimage to Mecca. The Emperor reconsidered the position and conceded peace. Then with his fellow-exiles from Bengal, Job Charnock sailed back from Madras to the estuary of the Ganges and to Satanati.

The founders of the future capital of India disembarked there on August 20, 1690, and saw "nothing left for their accommodation" but a few huts on the rising ground which, emerging from swamp and jungle, ran along the east bank of a reach of the great river about seventy miles from the

sea. The rain was falling day and night, wrote Charnock, and at first they were forced to betake themselves to their boats, " which at this season of the year is unhealthy." So impeded was the growth of the settlement by disease and other obstacles that only the courageous resolution of Charnock prevented its abandonment. His purpose was to obtain " four or five adjacent townes " and thereby improve the settlement " to a considerable strength," for, as he had written when he halted on the spot before withdrawing to Madras, " when once we come to be settled thoroughly, the country people will flock to us to live under our Government, the nature of which they are well acquainted with, and soe a vast disparity between the lenity of ours and the tyranny of their own, of the which we have a pregnant instance in their present flocking to us in such abundance as they dayly do." In 1693 the Company mourned the loss of the brave and faithful Charnock, " qui postquam in solo non suo peregrinatus esset diu, revertus est domum suae aeternitatis."[1] But his settlement lived on and more than justified all his hopes. Hindus and Armenians resorted to it; by degrees a fort was built which was named Fort William in honour of William III; and, spreading along the river-bank, the settlement absorbed the neighbouring villages of Kalikata and Gobindapur. It is probable that the first large warehouses were built in Kalikata, which therefore gave its name to the whole. In December 1699 the Company declared their possessions in Bengal a Presidency, and appointed Sir Charles Eyre, their agent, to be President and Governor of Fort William. The fort occupied a strong defensive position, for although seventy miles up the river, it was accessible at high tide to heavily armed ships.

At the opening of the eighteenth century there were the three English presidency settlements of Madras, Bombay and Calcutta with dependent factories; there were Portuguese settlers still on the west coast, of which Goa was chief; there were Dutch settlements at Cochin far down on the west coast, and at a few other unimportant places; there were Danish settlements at Tranquebar on the south-east coast and at Serampur close to Calcutta; there were French settlements at Pondicherry on the south-east coast, eighty-five miles below Madras, at Chandarnagar in Bengal and at Surat, Calicut, Balasore, Dacca, Patna, Kasimbazar.

A French East India Company had been in 1667 organised by Colbert, the great financial minister of Louis XIV. This

[1] Epitaph on Charnock's tombstone.

Company fitted out a squadron which in 1672 occupied the harbour of Trincomalee in Ceylon and appropriated St. Thomé near Madras. But both ports were soon taken by the Dutch, with whom the French were fighting in Europe. In 1676 François Martin acquired the site of Pondicherry on the sea-coast from a deputy of the Sultan of Bijapur, and opening a trade in piece-goods with the interior, built a town which in 1693 was captured by the Dutch. The latter occupied Pondicherry for four years, fortified it strongly, and restored it under the terms of the Treaty of Ryswick. About 1673 a small body of Frenchmen settled at Chandarnagar on the bank of the Hughli, twenty-two miles from Calcutta. In 1688 Chandarnagar was formally granted to them by the Emperor Aurangzeb. In 1701 Martin was appointed Director-General of all French settlements in India. Before he died in 1706 the Pondicherry factory was the centre of a flourishing town. But the progress of French enterprise in India suffered seriously from the War of the Spanish Succession, which arrested French naval development. The Dutch too were weakened by long land-war in Europe and turned their eyes more and more from India towards Ceylon, Java and the Spice Islands. The English Company's commerce gained from these circumstances. We must now, however, turn our attention to the course of events in Upper India where the death of Aurangzeb had inaugurated the rapid decline and ruin of his house.

It is certain that had succession to the imperial throne been regulated by well-understood primogeniture, much ruinous warfare would have been averted. But Bernier ascribes misrule and decay in the Asiatic empires of his time largely to the system of leaving princes to be educated in harems, ignorant of the duties of royalty, allowed to "appear on the stage of life as if they came from another world," knowing nothing of the domestic and political condition of their kingdoms. "The reins of Government," writes the Frenchman, "are often committed to some vizier, who, that he may reign lord absolute, with security and without contradiction, considers it an essential part of his plan to encourage his master in low pursuits and divert him from every avenue of knowledge."

Wars of succession, however, and pernicious education were not the only reasons for the rapid downfall of the dynasty which had at first produced a succession of capable sovereigns and two great leaders of men. Other causes were the effect of the sun of India on the Central Asian stock from which

the soldiers of Babar had sprung; Hindu resentment of Aurangzeb's fanatical persecution; the antagonism of the Rajputs and the Sikhs; and last, but not least, the victorious uprising of the Marathas. So formidable a combination of adverse circumstances would have severely taxed the genius of Akbar himself. It completely overwhelmed the unfortunate princes who followed Aurangzeb. First came two wars of succession following on the deaths of that monarch and his son Bahadur Shah I. After the latter came various puppets who were murdered or dethroned; and next, in 1719, Muhammad Shah, who survived till 1748. "Ages of ordinary decay" were crowded into his reign. Originally he possessed a highly competent minister in Chin Kilich Khan or Asaf Jah, a member of a distinguished Turki family; but in 1723, disgusted with the folly and intrigue of the court, Asaf Jah retired to the Deccan, his particular province, and from 1724 ruled there in virtual independence, founding the dynasty of the Nizams of Haidarabad. In 1724 Saadat Khan the Persian, ancestor of the Kings of Oudh, became Nawab-Wazir of that province, which he practically appropriated. Later on the Subadar of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa ceased to pay tribute to Delhi. Against such defections Muhammad Shah was powerless.

As the imperial power dwindled, the dominion of the Marathas increased. Sambhaji indeed was dead. His brother Raja Ram was dead. Then Raja Ram's widow, Tara Bai, a remarkable woman, became Regent, and her predatory subjects gave the imperial territories no rest. Sambhaji's son Shahu had been taken prisoner by Aurangzeb's soldiers with his father; but was released after the Emperor's death and returned to Maharashtra, enervated by long sojourning at Delhi. He established his claim to sovereignty with the assistance of Balaji Vishvanath, a Konkanasth Brahman, whom he appointed prime minister (Peishwa). Balaji was a far abler man than his master, and visiting Delhi in 1720, negotiated arrangements whereby Shahu received three imperial grants for the *chaut*, *sardeshmukhi* and *swaraj*, which he claimed as pertaining to his throne. The chaut and sardeshmukhi were to be levied on the six subas of the Deccan. The swaraj was to include sixteen districts of Maharashtra proper. Attached to the grant of chaut was the condition that the Raja should maintain 15,000 horse for the purpose of assisting the Emperor's deputy governors in maintaining order in the country. But this stipulation was a dead letter. In 1720 Balaji Vishvanath, exhausted by his labours at Delhi and general overwork, died, and was succeeded

as Peishwa by his son Baji Rao I, an able soldier and statesman who impressed on Raja Shahu the magnitude of the opportunity, the decrepitude of the Imperial Court. Now was the time to expel strangers from the land of the Hindus and to win immortal fame. The Muslim kingdoms of the Deccan were gone. Only the withering tree of the Moghal Empire remained. " Strike at the trunk," he said, " and the branches will fall of themselves ! "

Maratha dominion spread through war under the leadership of Baji Rao, largely at the expense of Asaf Jah, better known as Nizam-ul-Mulk. Bassein was taken from the Portuguese. The ancestors of the ruling houses of Sindia, Holkar, Baroda, Berar, distinguished themselves in war and received fiefs in return for their services. In 1737 the Marathas appeared in the suburbs of Delhi, but returned forthwith, apprehending invasion of their own territory by Asaf Jah. In 1739 Delhi was attacked from another quarter by Nadir Shah the Persian.

Akbar's empire had included Afghanistan ; but after his death, Kandahar was taken by Persia and successfully held against subsequent attack. In 1739 Nadir Shah, King of Persia, invaded and annexed the rest of Afghanistan. Going further, at the head of about 60,000 seasoned troops, Kurds, Georgians, Afghans, Turkomans, Persians, he advanced into India by way of Ghazni, Kabul and Lahore. At Kurnal, near Delhi, his army encountered enormous forces collected by the Emperor Muhammad Shah. The Persian disposed of this host in two hours, routing them utterly, slaying some 20,000 and capturing immense booty. Delhi was occupied ; but the inhabitants rose on hearing a false rumour of the Persian king's death. They were punished by a nine-hours' massacre, and their city was sacked and gutted. Afghanistan and all Moghal territory west of the Indus were formally ceded to the Persian, who departed with an enormous quantity of treasure.

About the same time the Rohillas or hill-men, an Afghan tribe, invaded and appropriated a fertile territory on the north bank of the Ganges which became known as Rohilkhand. And in 1748, before the death of the unfortunate Muhammad Shah, India was again invaded, this time by Ahmad Shah, an Abdali or Durani Afghan who, after the assassination of Nadir Shah at Meshed, had been crowned king in Afghanistan. His force was small and was repulsed. Returning later, in the reign of the Emperor Ahmad Shah, he obtained cession of the Punjab, but failed to establish effective authority in that province.

In the middle of the eighteenth century the Moghal Emperor had become a "king of shreds and patches," as Warren Hastings once called him. In 1754 the wretched monarch of the day was blinded and deposed by his own minister. Next came an unfortunate emperor in whose reign Ahmad Shah Durani again invaded India, and this time captured, sacked and massacred at Delhi. As the hot weather came on, the Afghan returned to his mountains; but no sooner had he departed than Upper India was invaded by the Marathas.

Baji Rao had died in 1740, leaving three sons, of whom the eldest, Balaji Rao, succeeded him as Peishwa. Balaji was as ambitious as his father and grandfather, but of inferior calibre. He induced Raja Shahu to appoint by deed the Peishwa to be ruler of the Maratha Empire *ex officio*. The Raja was to be a figure-head. Shahu died, and all his successors were puppets. But the Empire of the Peishwas developed into a confederacy of principalities under chiefs descended from notable soldiers and owning a loose fealty to their chief at Poona. When Balaji Rao despatched expeditions against the territories of the Moghal Emperor or the Nizam, he asked for co-operation from other members of this confederacy. In 1758 an expedition under his brother Raghunath Rao, better known to history as Raghoba, occupied the Punjab, defeating the Afghan Governor of Sirhind and entering Lahore in triumph. Raghoba returned to Poona, leaving Maratha troops behind him in the Punjab and the jagirdar Mulhar Rao Holkar in Malwa. The audacity of the incursion had thoroughly alarmed all the Muhammadan princes in Upper India. Hindus from the south were turning the tables on their conquerors. But the Afghans redressed the balance.

In 1759 Alamgir II the nominal emperor of the day was murdered. He was succeeded by his son Shah Alam, a fugitive in Bengal. The personality of each successive emperor was insignificant. All alike were tools in the hands of stronger men. In 1759 Ahmad Shah Durani reoccupied the Punjab. The Rohillas prepared to join him. He drove out the Maratha garrison with ease, and in two actions near Delhi routed the soldiers of Sindia and Holkar. But the Peishwa's cousin and chief general, Sadasheo Bhao, had just obtained by force of arms a large cession of Asaf Jah's territory, and persuaded the Peishwa to allow him to challenge the Durani to a decisive struggle. He organised a great army and a powerful train of artillery, calling all the confederate Maratha chiefs to the Peishwa's standard and asking Suraj Mal, the Jat Raja

of Bhartpur, to help him. Meantime Ahmad Shah Durani, after occupying Delhi, continued his march south-eastward and encamped on the Ganges, where he was joined by the Rohillas.

In 1760 a great Maratha force under the nominal command of Viswas Rao, son of the Peishwa, aged seventeen, but really directed by Sadasheo Bhao, marched up to and occupied Delhi. The army included contingents from all the confederate Maratha principalities. It was joined by the Jats, who subsequently quarrelled with the generalissimo and withdrew before the climax. The Marathas remained at Delhi till the rains were over and the ordinary campaigning season began. Then Sadasheo Bhao established an entrenched camp at Panipat, mounting his guns on a rampart and arranging for the cutting of the Afghan communications. But the communications, when cut, were speedily restored; and as the Maratha leader was inclined to rely on his artillery and stake his all on a pitched battle rather than to adopt the guerrilla tactics of his race, he soon found that his forces were beleaguered and in danger of starvation. Endeavouring to negotiate, he was met with the stern reply that the enemy understood the business of war and would negotiate in his own fashion.

At dawn on January 13, 1761, the Marathas left their tents and joined battle. At first they fought well and threw the right wing of the Afghan army into confusion, piercing the centre with crushing artillery fire. But the Durani was a brave and steadfast commander. He rallied fugitives, brought up all his reserves and sent a strong reinforcement to his centre with orders to charge desperately "sword in hand in close order at full gallop." The charge turned the fortunes of the day. The Marathas were utterly routed. They were pursued with the utmost fury for twenty miles in all directions. Many of their leaders were slain. Their total loss was estimated at 200,000. Thousands of prisoners were killed whose heads were piled up in heaps before Afghan tents. Viswas Rao fell in the battle. The Afghan soldiers demanded that his body should be dried and stuffed to carry to Kabul; but, through the intercession of the Rohillas and of Shuja-ud-daula, Nawab Wazir of Oudh, who had served on the left of the Afghan line, it was given up to be burnt after Hindu fashion. Sadasheo Bhao had fled from the battle and is believed to have been killed in the pursuit.

The news of the battle spread consternation throughout Maharashtra and dealt Balaji Rao a mortal blow. He died in the

same year, and with him departed the best days of the Peishwas. Never again did they hold the same commanding authority over the confederate Maratha States, although they retained their position for another sixty years. North-western India and the Doab, the rich territory which lies between the Ganges and the Jumna, lay at the feet of Ahmad Shah Durani. But a mutiny of his soldiers, who refused to stay longer in the uncongenial climate of Hindostan, compelled the Afghan king to return to his mountains. Shuja-ud-daula went his way to Oudh. Shah Alam was left to gather up the fragments of a great dominion. The last Muslim empire was vanishing fast. The land was a prize for the strongest. So far the Afghans had proved the strongest. But they had come merely to conquer, plunder, massacre and retire. Who could conquer, govern and protect ?

VII

THE FRENCH AND THE ENGLISH

The paralysis of imperial power which followed the death of Aurangzeb soon made itself felt in the peninsula, where the provinces which had taken the place of the vanished Muslim sultanates were frequently invaded by troops of Maratha horse. For protection they were dependent upon such armed force as the Subadar Asaf Jah, invested from Delhi with the title of Nizam-ul-Mulk (governor of the country), could muster with the aid of his lieutenants. Nizam-ul-Mulk's charge included the territories of various Muslim Nawabs, his deputies, and of Hindu Rajas who actually or professedly paid tribute. The Nawabs were nominally appointed by the Emperor, but really by the Nizam. The more powerful tended to establish dynasties.

The principal Nawab was the Nawab of the Karnatik,[1] or, as he was commonly called, the Nawab of Arcot, his capital. The eastern or Haidarabad Karnatik is a rich lowland tract lying between the Rivers Kistna and Coleroon on the north and south, and the sea and the hills on the east and west. The first dynasty of the Nawabs of Arcot was founded by a *faujdar* or military commandant, appointed in 1708 by the Subadar of the Deccan.

Both Pondicherry and Madras lie on the coast of the Karnatik; and in order to understand the events which were

[1] Conventionally, Carnatic.

now to arise from this circumstance, the position of the French Company at this time must be examined.

This body had been incorporated with various other companies in a mammoth association called the "Company of the Indies," and when in 1720 the association collapsed, a "Perpetual Company of the Indies" took its place. The Directors of this "perpetual Company" were nominated by the Crown; and control thereof was vested in the King's Commissaries. The shareholders were "rentiers" whose dividends were guaranteed by the State at a fixed rate. They practically represented a subordinate department of a despotic government and for years never met. In 1721, however, their servants definitely took possession of the Mauritius (Isle of France), having previously occupied the neighbouring Isle de Bourbon. They thus obtained a useful naval base in the Indian Ocean, and in 1725 acquired the port of Mahe on the Malabar Coast. Pondicherry developed into a fine fortified port upon an open roadstead, and Chandarnagar, under Joseph Francis Dupleix, became an entrepôt of considerable trade. Rivalry was keen, but for long pacific, between French and English. Relations altered after the outbreak of the War of the Austrian Succession in 1740, in which France and England at first merely aided the chief combatants.

Martin, the founder of Pondicherry, had been careful to cultivate intimate relations with the neighbouring Indian Powers, and had even tendered his friendly offices for the settlement of disputes. His policy was carried on by his successors, especially by Dumas, Governor-General at Pondicherry, who had been rewarded with some territory and the title of Nawab by the Emperor at Delhi, for affording a sanctuary to refugees and to ladies of the family of the Nawab of Arcot during a Maratha invasion in 1740.

As Dumas was about to return to Europe, he obtained leave to transfer his new dignity to his successor, Dupleix, a man of extraordinary courage and fertility of resource, determined to extend by every means possible the political power of his nation in India. Arriving at Pondicherry from Chandarnagar, which he had administered with remarkable success, Dupleix found the Karnatik devastated by the Marathas and the Nawab's administration unsettled. Hostilities between the French and English settlements seemed imminent. Particularly anxious to impress Indian opinion, he returned to Chandarnagar and was there installed as a Nawab of the Moghal Empire. Then definitely assuming office at Pondicherry in

1742, he set himself to prepare for a great effort. He was informed by a despatch from his Directors dated September 1743 that, in view of the probability of all-round war with England, only four vessels could be sent to India, two of which would go to Pondicherry. He must reduce his expenses by at least one-half and spend no more money on the renovation of the fortifications of Pondicherry, which he had found in a crumbling condition.

Dupleix did his best to economise, but not on fortifications. He devoted a large portion of his private fortune to securing Pondicherry by a solid rampart with a broad ditch on the side which faced the sea. He took care that the two ships which arrived from France were provided with cargoes and sent back with all despatch for arms and munitions. These measures came none too soon. In March 1744 France declared war on England.

We must now retrace our steps and survey the history of the English Presidencies in the early decades of the eighteenth century. We will first turn to Bengal.

Irritated at the exactions of the Nawab Nazim, the President and Council at Calcutta in 1715 despatched an embassy to Delhi, which, after much delay and in return for a successful cure of the Emperor Farrukh Siyar by its doctor William Hamilton, procured grants of certain villages near Calcutta and Madras as well as a right to trade freely in all provinces customs-free. The licence depreciated in value as the imperial authority weakened, but was useful. Bengal too remained comparatively orderly, as its early Viceroys were capable men and the Marathas were at first far off. The English settlements in this rich, fertile, well-watered province prospered and English commerce increased. In 1735 Calcutta possessed a population of about 100,000.

Bombay, however, embarrassed by proximity to the Marathas, advanced less speedily. Its commerce was harassed by the raids of a gang of pirates under Kanhoji Angria, originally commander of the Peishwa's fleet, who had made Gheria his stronghold. Under pressure from dangerous neighbours, by 1746 Bombay had developed a sea and land force of over 2,600, including 750 Europeans, and was the strongest of the three Presidencies. In 1739, by a treaty with the Peishwa, the Bombay settlers were permitted to trade freely throughout his dominions.

Madras was worried by predatory incursions of Maratha forces into the Deccan and Karnatik. Its relations with the

Nizam and the Nawab were friendly. Fort St. George was believed to be fairly strong in guns, and business prospered.

At the head of each Presidency was a Governor-in-Council. The members of Council were expected not to sit as cyphers, but "to have each his negative whenever they believed they had a just reason!" Majority of votes decided every question. The Governor and Council superintended the civil and military departments, regulated intercourse with the neighbouring Powers and conducted correspondence with London. Their consultations were entered by a secretary in a book maintained for the purpose, "together with all occurrences and observations after the manner of a diary." A duplicate copy was afterwards sent home to the Directors. "In these old silent 'consultation books' preserved at Bombay, Madras and Calcutta lies buried the history of the rise of British dominion in India." [1]

Below the Governor-in-Council were the senior merchants, merchants, factors, writers and apprentices in regular gradation. The military forces were weak. When in 1746 the French attacked Madras, the principal officer among the garrison was one Peter Eckman, an ignorant superannuated Swede, who had at first enlisted, and at that time bore the rank of a first lieutenant; he was assisted by two other lieutenants and seven ensigns. Although the garrison had near 200 pieces of cannon, "yet they wanted men that were capable of playing them; besides that the want of military stores was equal to the paucity of military men." [2]

These Presidency settlements had ceased to be mere factories. They included towns with mixed populations of Hindus, Muhammadans and Europeans who traded under permission from the Company. They had become semi-colonies.

The Directors in London, unlike the Directors of the French Company, were aware that they represented a national force as well as an independent and wealthy corporation. "Now," they said, "we are established by a Parliamentary authority, we esteem it a duty incumbent upon us, to England and to our posterity, to propagate the future interest of our nation in India." They carefully watched their commercial interests, but also aimed at forwarding the prosperity of their settlements by methods which are thus described: "We have always built on this as a fundamental maxim that security of pro-

[1] Sir George Forrest, *Life of Lord Clive*, vol. i, p. 20.

[2] J. H. Grose, *A Voyage to the East Indies*, 1772, quoted on p. 37; Forrest's *Life of Lord Clive*, vol. i.

tection and freedom in liberty and property with a due administration of justice must of necessity people your territories, considering the country all about you is under a despotic government."[1] Their instructions to their servants as to administration of the settlements cannot be bettered. "Never do an act of arbitrary power to hurt anybody. Let your determination be always just, not rigorous, but inclining to the just merciful side. Always try the cause, never the party. Don't let passion over-cloud your reason. This will make people respect you, whereas one violent sentence or action will sully the reputation of ten good ones."[2]

We come now to the year 1744 and the beginning of the long struggle between France and England in India. Aware of her weakness at sea, France had proposed a neutralisation of the French and English settlements in India; but her proposal was rejected. In July 1745 an English naval squadron, under Commander Barnet, appeared off the Coromandel coast. Dupleix appealed to Anwar-ud-din, Nawab of Arcot, who promptly directed the Madras Government to prevent attack upon the French settlements. The Madras Government obeyed; and the approach of the monsoon compelled Barnet to retire from the coast; but he returned in 1746, and dying at Fort St. David, a fortified port twelve miles from Pondicherry, was succeeded by a Captain Peyton, who, prohibited from land-hostilities, could do nothing but wait for the appearance of a French fleet.

The fleet arrived in June 1746 under the command of Mahé La Bourdonnais, a veteran sailor who was Governor of the Isle of France. After an indecisive action and some futile manœuvring, Peyton and his squadron made off to Bengal because their sixty-gun ship had become so leaky as to be in danger of being sunk by the firing of her own cannon![3] Madras was left to its fate, and was captured by La Bourdonnais with ease in September 1746 after an innocuous bombardment of a few days. Among the prisoners of war taken was a young writer named Robert Clive. In spite of the injunctions of Dupleix, who intended to eradicate the English settlements, La Bourdonnais engaged to restore Madras on payment of a ransom of £400,000, and thus quarrelled violently with Dupleix. The monsoon of 1746 arrived; and he returned to the Isle of France with shattered ships, but left at Pondicherry a strong

[1] Letter to Bengal in 1721, Roberts, *Historical Geography*, vol. i, p. 88
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 87.
[3] Orme, vol. i, p. 67.

reinforcement of disciplined soldiers. Then Dupleix, repudiating the recent engagement as concluded without his authority, seized Madras and all the English who were unable to make their escape to Fort St. David. But here he offended the Nawab, whose consent to his operations had been obtained by a bribe to be paid in two sums, one forthwith, and the other when Madras should fall.[1] Dupleix refused to pay the second sum; and the Nawab despatched an army of about 8,000 under his own son Mahfuz Khan to take Madras from the French. This army was routed with ease by a small French force, partly by reason of the inefficiency of its artillery, in an action which clearly demonstrated the superiority of European discipline and training. Then Dupleix, coming smoothly to terms with the Nawab, sent his troops to besiege Fort St. David, which was stoutly defended by the English Presidency Government under John Hinde, and received reinforcements from Bombay, Bengal and England.

January 1748 saw the arrival of a veteran soldier, Major Stringer Lawrence, who reorganised the garrison, drilled and trained the sepoys thoroughly, and taught Clive, who had become a temporary ensign, the art of war. The French failed to take Fort St. David; and on July 29, 1748, Admiral Boscawen arrived from England with a strong squadron of ships and a commission as General and Commander-in-Chief. The siege of Fort St. David was raised by the French, and Pondicherry was beleaguered by Boscawen's forces. Dupleix defended his capital gallantly; and Stringer Lawrence was taken prisoner in the course of the siege, which was raised before the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle (1748) restored Madras to the English in exchange for Louisburg in North America.

So ended the first stage of hostilities between France and England in India. It coincided with war elsewhere between the two countries, and resulted in augmented prestige for the French but in a great shrinkage of their trade owing to their weakness at sea, whereas exports to England from India had increased in value. It was shown that in any future war the Company which could not secure its maritime communications would lose its trade as well as any reliable hope of reinforcements from Europe. No territorial advantage which its servants could procure was likely to be permanent in such circumstances.

Dupleix, however, hardly realising the superior power of the English Navy, set himself to secure preponderating

[1] Forrest, *Life of Clive*, vol. i, p. 46.

influence for France on land by taking sides in Indian succession quarrels and lending troops to the claimants of his choice. Early in 1749 the English themselves had sent a force to support a claimant to the throne of Tanjore and had thus obtained a useful fort. But Dupleix aimed at higher game than a fort; and a way was opened for his intrigue by the death of Nizam-ul-Mulk in 1748. A commanding influence was thus removed from Deccan affairs, and a succession was bitterly disputed. Nasir Jang, the elder son of the dead Nizam, was opposed by Muzaffar Jang, a grandson, who joined forces with Chanda Sahib, a claimant of the Nawabi of the Karnatik. The two latter were supported by 400 French and 2,000 sepoys, in French service. Anwar-ud-din, Nawab of the Karnatik, at once opposed these allies, but was killed in action. Marching to Pondicherry, Muzaffar Jang proclaimed himself Subadar of the Deccan and invested Chanda Sahib with the rulership of the Karnatik. Muhammad Ali, the younger son of Anwar-ud-din, fled to Trichinopoly, of which he had previously been Governor, with a few troops.

Then Nasir Jang, who had proclaimed himself successor to his father, advanced into the Karnatik to suppress his nephew Muzaffar Jang. He appointed Muhammad Ali Nawab, and accepted the assistance of an English contingent under Stringer Lawrence. At first he was completely successful, and Muzaffar Jang surrendered. But afterwards Nasir Jang was assassinated by contrivance of three of his own Pathan (Afghan) Nawabs; and then Muzaffar Jang was declared Nizam by the troops and installed at Pondicherry. He bestowed profuse rewards on Dupleix, whom he proclaimed Nawab of all the country south of the Kistna. But, on setting out for his capital, accompanied by the notable French commander Bussy and a strong French contingent, Muzaffar Jang was killed in a skirmish. Bussy promptly filled his place by releasing Salabat Jang, the third son of Nizam-ul-Mulk, then a prisoner in the camp, and declaring him Viceroy of the Deccan. Together with his troops Bussy took up his residence at Haidarabad, the capital of the Nizam's territory, and later on he secured an assignment of the revenue of four rich districts on the east coast known as the "Northern Circars,"[1] as provision for payment of his force.

Thus French influence was supreme both with the Nizam and with Chanda Sahib, the *de facto* Nawab of Arcot. But at this crisis Muhammad Ali, son of the late Nawab, from

[1] Or sarkars.

Trichinopoly, applied to the Governor of Madras for help. Nor did he apply in vain. Stringer Lawrence indeed had gone home; and Governor Thomas Saunders was weak in men and resources. But the need was imperative, and a force was despatched to the relief of Trichinopoly. With that force went Clive as commissary in charge of supply and transport. Then, in an hour of supreme need, he found his true vocation and by conceiving and executing the daring project of seizing and holding Arcot, the capital of the Karnatik, he changed the fortunes of his countrymen. Under his leadership for fifty days, "amidst fatigue, hunger, disease and imminent danger, 320 men in all, commanded by four officers, held a vast fortress invested by 10,000 men before the little band had time to repair the dilapidated defences."[1] Arcot was held; Trichinopoly was saved; Chanda Sahib was captured, and killed by some Maratha allies of Muhammad Ali.

During more than three years of scrambling warfare, while, as France and England were at peace in Europe, neither French nor English struck directly at each other's settlements in India, it was clearly shown that Dupleix could find no commander of the calibre of Clive or of Lawrence, who had returned from England. Nevertheless skirmishes went on until Dupleix asked for peace, producing impossible demands. His Directors, however, were weary of him and aghast at the state of their finances. In August 1754 he was superseded by M. Godeheu, through whose mediation peace was concluded in 1755. The Companies agreed to eschew territorial aggrandisement and local wars, to retain certain places and districts and to recognise Muhammad Ali as Nawab of the Karnatik.

Outwardly neither Company had established a decisive superiority. Both had succeeded in augmenting their European strength on the spot. An English naval squadron was waiting on the coast; but the French were stronger in native cavalry, and according to the Governor of Madras were far more influential with "the country powers." Bussy was established at the Nizam's capital with a disciplined force of 5,000.

But whereas the English East India Company was prospering commercially, the French Company was on the verge of bankruptcy and was demanding large subsidies from their Government Treasury. On their side was a Navy numbering in 1755 only 67 ships-of-the-line and 31 frigates, against the English strength of 131 men-of-war and 81 frigates. The

[1] Forrest's *Clive*, vol. i, p. 152.

French nation was not behind its Company. Nor did the French Government approve of the soaring ambitions of Dupleix. So he went; and the English candidate Muhammad Ali remained Nawab of the Karnatik. It is impossible to exaggerate the courage, perseverance and fertility of resource shown by Dupleix. His scheme for establishing a great French dominion in India was thwarted by the inherent difficulties of his position, by the resolution and genius of Clive and by the naval power of England.

VIII

PLASSEY

WHILE in the Karnatik the French and English were constantly fighting, in Bengal they were at peace. By the Ganges, above and near Calcutta, were the French settlement of Chandarnagar and the Dutch settlement of Chinsurah. In wealth and consequence Calcutta stood first. It commanded the great waterway which leads from the sea into the rich fertile plains of Bengal, and possessed the only safe harbourage for large ships which is anywhere available along the east coast of India. It was the resort of the principal Hindu and Armenian merchants of the province.

Throughout the war in the Karnatik, Alavardi Khan was Nawab Nazim of Bengal. A native of Delhi, Persian by race, he had risen to power by overthrowing his predecessor, whose minister he had been. He had proved a capable ruler, and while levying subsidies from the European settlements he had allowed no fighting. For eight years his territories had been raided by Maratha cavalry, who burnt and destroyed far and wide, driving the villagers to large cities and European factories for shelter; but in 1751 relief was procured by the cession of part of Orissa to the plunderers and by a promise to pay annual blackmail. The war in the Karnatik and its outcome attracted the keen attention of Alavardi Khan, who being urged to seize Calcutta and thus avert an obvious danger, declined a contest with the English. In April 1756 he died and was succeeded by his nephew and adopted son Mirza Mahmud, better known by the alias Siraj-ud-daula (the Lamp of State). This man has been described by a Muslim historian as "totally destitute of sense and penetration, and yet having a head so obscured by the smoke of ignorance, and so giddy

and intoxicated with the fumes of youth and power and dominion, that he knew no distinction between good and bad, nor betwixt vice and virtue." [1]

Shortly before the death of Alavardi Khan, news arrived at the court of Murshidabad, then the capital of Bengal, of the capture of Gheria by English forces under Clive and Admiral Watson. This stronghold on the Malabar coast had become a nest of pirates, and when taken was made over to the Peishwa, who had sent a force to co-operate in the expedition. But the intelligence deepened the apprehensions excited by the tidings from the Karnatik, and largely explains Siraj-ud-daula's subsequent aggression. Just then the French and English settlements were warned from Europe of the imminence of war between their two countries.

At Chandarnagar and Calcutta fortification was being pushed on when orders to stop work and destroy what had been done arrived from the Nawab. The French alleged that they had merely repaired damage wrought by lightning. The Governor at Calcutta, Mr. Drake, answered that, fearing lest in the coming war the neutrality of Bengal should be violated by the French, as that of the Karnatik had been violated in the last war, he was merely "repairing the line of guns to the waterside." This answer incensed the Nawab, who was already annoyed with the English in a minor connection. Promptly seizing the English factory at Kasimbazar, he marched on Calcutta, with an army of 50,000, and arrived there on June 16, 1756. The strength of the garrison in Fort William was only 264, of whom some were Indian-born Portuguese and Armenians. The defences were poor and had been impaired by neglect. The ammunition was largely useless. Of the commandant, Holwell, a member of the Presidency Council, afterwards wrote: "Touching his military capacity, I am a stranger. I can only say we were unhappy in his keeping it to himself if he had any, as neither I, nor, I believe, anyone else, was witness to any part of his conduct that spoke or bore the appearance of his being the commanding officer of the garrison."

In spite, however, of all these disadvantages, and of the open nature of the town, the President refused to surrender; but later, his nerve giving way, accompanied by the commandant and others, he slipped off to a ship and dropped down the river to Falta, a small village on the bank. The rest of the garrison, under Holwell, made a gallant defence but were com-

[1] *Siyaru-l Mutakherin*, vol. i, sec. 8.

pelled to capitulate on June 20. On the stifling night of that disastrous day, when the climate of Bengal was most oppressive, 146 were crammed into a guard-room about 20 feet long by 14 wide with two small grated windows, for hours of horror. Only 23 came out alive. The rest "mostly gentlemen and men of hopes,"[1] perished through suffocation.

The most definite evidence regarding the tragedy of "the Black Hole" attaches the responsibility for it to the Nawab's officers. Siraj-ud-daula himself had merely ordered that the captives should be secured. As soon as he heard of the result, he ordered their release from the cell. Orme says that on listening to Holwell's representations, he "seemed, as much as a man naturally cruel could be, affected with what had passed." He certainly called no one to account for it; and because he could extract no news of hidden treasure from Holwell, he detained him and three of his principal fellow-sufferers. They were subjected to further brutal treatment for which Orme blames the Nawab's officers. The rest were liberated.

The fugitives at Falta despatched a ship to Madras with tidings of their misfortunes. Within five days of its arrival with the news, a trading vessel was despatched with 230 soldiers under Major Kilpatrick. On October 16 an expedition followed under Clive, now a lieutenant-colonel, and Admiral Watson, who commanded the naval squadron which had been despatched from England before the conclusion of peace with France and had taken part in the capture of Gheria. Clive was in complete military and political control. As he wrote to England, he feared that progress would be retarded by "the woods and swampiness of the country," but was resolved to bring about a lasting settlement. Drake and a committee of the Calcutta Presidency Council requested him to be guided by their orders. He declined, but agreed to consult them. Owing to the season and the strength of the currents, he only reached Falta in December, when many of the refugees had succumbed to fever and privation. The ships arrived off Fort William on January 2, 1757, when, after slight resistance, the enemy evacuated. Then Hughli was stormed. In February Siraj-ud-daula signed a treaty restoring the Company's possessions and promising compensation for damages. He solicited aid from Bussy at Haidarabad, and was further discomfited when, news arriving of war between France and England, Clive's soldiers on March 23, 1757, captured Chan-

[1] Holwell's Narrative.

darnagar after a gallant resistance. Further negotiation followed, but both sides were playing for time.

A conspiracy to overthrow Siraj-ud-daula was in progress among his own subjects, many of whom detested him and wished "nothing better than to be rid of such a government." [1] Jaggat Seth, a prominent Hindu banker, who had been grossly insulted by his master, and Mir Jafir, a Muslim nobleman, who had married Ala Vardi Khan's sister, approached the English. Amirchand, a wealthy Sikh banker, assisted in negotiating with the plotters. An agreement with Mir Jafir was in prospect when Amirchand stipulated for a commission of 5 per cent. on the Nawab's hoarded treasure. Otherwise he would divulge the conspiracy to Siraj-ud-daula. Under Clive's direction, the threat was met by the preparation of two draft-agreements, one fictitious, containing an article promising the money to Amirchand, the other genuine, omitting this stipulation. Watson refused to sign the former; and Clive ordered a counterfeit of his signature to be attached to it, and thus quieted Amirchand, who was only undeceived after Plassey. Years after Clive explained to a Parliamentary Committee that he had acted from no interested motive, but "with the design of disappointing the expectations of a rapacious man." This was undoubtedly true, but does not excuse his action; and no incident of his career has been so harmful to his memory.[2]

Mir Jafir agreed to the real treaty and to a private covenant whereby he engaged to give a large donation of money to the Committee at Calcutta, of which Clive was President, as well as £500,000 to the army and navy. Such donations were in those days regarded as permissible. Then Clive brought the quarrel with the Nawab to a final arbitrament. The latter's army, about 50,000 strong, composed of 35,000 infantry, 15,000 cavalry, 53 guns mainly of large calibre, entrenched near the village of Plassey, by the Bhagirathi River south of Kasimbazar, was on June 23, 1757, attacked by the English force of 800 Europeans, 2,100 sepoys and 10 light field-pieces, without cavalry. Two days before, seeing good reason to suspect that Mir Jafir would fail him, Clive had held a council of war, which had decided by a majority vote, with his concurrence, to postpone further action "till joined by some country power." Eyre Coote, who commanded the third division of Clive's force, had voted for immediate action. His journal records that

[1] *Siyaru-l-Mutakherin*, vol. i. sec. 8.

[2] See Forrest's *Clive*, vol. i, pp. 421–5, for a full discussion of the matter.

about an hour after the Council had broken up, the Colonel informed him that "notwithstanding the resolution of the Council of War, he intended to attack."

On the 22nd the English moved towards the hostile entrenchments and took possession of a grove and a hunting-lodge of the Nawab's, which they occupied. Soon after dawn on the 23rd, a fine monsoon day, they discovered the enemy attempting to surround them and occupying adjacent eminences with their cannon. An artillery duel went on throughout the morning, in the course of which the Nawab lost four of his principal generals. At noon the rain came down in torrents for half an hour, and the Nawab's guns ceased firing, but resumed when the shower ended. About two o'clock, Coote tells us, the enemy began to retire to their lines. Then Clive, drenched to the skin, retired to a neighbouring house to change his clothes. A detachment of his force under Major Kilpatrick advanced without orders. Clive returning to the line sent back Kilpatrick, but took command of the advance himself and ordered Coote's division to support it. Little resistance was encountered, and by five o'clock Clive's army was in possession of the Nawab's camp. "While we were pursuing the enemy," says Coote, "a large body of his horse was observed on our right; and upon our firing some shot at them, a messenger arrived with a letter to the Colonel from Mir Jafir, acquainting him that he—Mir Jafir—commanded that body, and requesting an interview with him that night or the next morning." [1]

In truth, it was only when victory was assured that Mir Jafir declared himself, although his dubious attitude certainly contributed to the pusillanimous behaviour of the Nawab's army. Siraj-ud-daula himself fled from the field when he learnt that the British were attacking his entrenchments, and that some of his troops were retiring. Clive's loss was small and the enemy's was not large. A small party of French had only retreated because ordered to do so by the Nawab; but the enemy generally had fought without spirit or enthusiasm. As Mr. Fortescue has written, "The campaign of Plassey is less a study of military skill than of the iron will and unshaken nerve that could lead three thousand men against a host of unknown strength, and held them undaunted, a single slender line, within a ring of fifty thousand enemies." [2]

[1] Wylly, *Life of Sir Eyre Coote*, p. 42. See too Forrest's *Life of Clive*, vol. i, pp. 452–9.

[2] Fortescue, *History of the British Army*, vol. ii. p. 340.

After Plassey, Clive advanced to Murshidabad and there installed Mir Jafir as Nawab Nazim of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. Siraj-ud-daula, deserted by courtiers and servants, fell into the hands of Mir Jafir's son Miran and was put to death by Miran's orders. The new Nawab made large presents to those to whom he owed his throne, and granted to the East India Company a perpetual lease of "the twenty-four Parganas," a tract of 882 square miles lying principally to the south of the Calcutta settlement. These arrangements were confirmed from Delhi. An Imperial *farman* (decree) gave the Company perpetual heritable jurisdiction over the twenty-four Parganas, for which they were to pay £28,000 as quit-rent. A *sanad*, or deed of appointment, was conferred on Mir Jafir; and a patent bestowed upon Clive the *mansab*, or rank of commander of 6,000 horse. When required to offer the customary gift, Clive did so, but objected that he had not received the *jagir* (fief) customarily attached to a mansab. He steadied and preserved the new administration through the perils of domestic rebellion and a dangerous invasion of Bihar by an army under the Nawab of Allahabad and Prince Ali Gauhar, afterwards the Emperor Shah Alam, then a fugitive from Delhi. In gratitude Mir Jafir in 1759 conferred on Clive, as the jagir attached to his mansab, the right to receive the quit-rent of the twenty-four Parganas, which was equivalent to the yearly pay of a Mansabdar of 6,000 horse.[1] Clive thus became the Company's ground landlord.

Neither Mir Jafir nor his son addressed themselves to settling Bengal, distracted by successive Maratha raids, by wars, by the recent invasion of Bihar. The new Nawab's position was not only inherently difficult, but was complicated by the heavy financial obligations which he had undertaken. He intrigued elsewhere; and the resulting position is explained in a letter which on January 7, 1759, Clive addressed to the first William Pitt, stating that Mir Jafir and his son were unreliable; but that, in the event of their giving trouble, a force of 2,000 Europeans would enable the Company "to take the sovereignty upon themselves." The sepoys, "being much better treated and paid by us than by the country powers, will readily enter our service." The people would acquiesce with joy, as under the existing despotic government they had no security for life or property. They had no attachment to particular princes. The Emperor would assent. The court at Delhi had in fact

[1] Forrest, *Life of Clive*, vol. ii, pp. 145–6.

already asked Clive to collect their share of the revenues of Bengal, which for some time had been " very ill paid." He would receive the title of Diwan (financial minister), and would thus rank next in dignity to the Nawab. He had declined the offer mainly because he saw no likelihood of the Company's providing " a sufficient force to support properly so considerable an employ," which would open the way to the governorship itself. The Company could hardly, without the nation's assistance, maintain so wide a dominion. It was therefore worth considering whether the British Government should themselves take steps to secure such an acquisition. The main body of the Company's army was employed in Southern India against the French, who were practically at the end of their resources.

It is noteworthy that Clive wrote before Panipat and ignored the Afghans and Marathas, who, as we saw in Chapter VII, were then disputing for mastery in North-west India. It seems clear that he knew little of affairs far up-country. Pitt apparently sympathised with, but did not seriously entertain, these proposals. He considered that even if such a genius as Clive " effected the affair," it was not probable that he would be succeeded by others equal to the resultant situation.

A charter of 1858 allowed the Company " to cede, restore or dispose of any fortresses, districts or territories acquired by right of conquest from any of the Indian princes or governments " during the late troubles between the Company and the Nabob of Bengal, or which should be acquired by conquest in time coming," subject to a proviso that the Company should not have power to cede, restore or dispose of any territory acquired from the subjects of any European Power without the special licence and approbation of the Crown.

It is now time to turn to events in Southern India. In April 1758 a French expedition had landed at Pondicherry under the Count de Lally, son of an Irish refugee, a gallant soldier but hot-headed and impatient of advice. He quarrelled badly both with the Governor of Pondicherry and with Bussy, whom, much against the will of that distinguished soldier, he promptly summoned from Haidarabad. He began by bombarding and capturing Fort St. David, but was seriously embarrassed by the ignorance and incapacity of the Governor and Council at Pondicherry, who had taken no measures to supply him with stores and transport and could find him no funds. He spent his own money freely, but was compelled to wait till December 1758 before attacking Madras ; and then

his officers were in bad humour; his soldiers were crying out for pay; his sepoys were deserting freely; his provisions were low. Already the ships which accompanied him had proved themselves no match for the English ships, and in February Madras was relieved from the sea.

Clive, in disregard of the views of his council, profiting by Bussy's absence from Haidarabad, had created a diversion by despatching a force under Colonel Forde, a brilliant commander, to the Northern Circars, reserving only 280 Europeans for the defence of Fort William. Forde was completely successful; and Nizam Salabat Jang, losing faith in the French, in May 1759 ceded by treaty the Northern Circars to the British, engaging to have nothing more to do with his former allies. From February 1759 Lally was on the defensive. In January 1760 he was severely defeated by Eyre Coote at Wandewash, and later he was driven into Pondicherry and there compelled to surrender.

Pondicherry was restored to France by the Peace of Paris in February 1763, but with demolished fortifications and under the conditions that on the Coromandel coast only a limited number of armed men might be maintained by France and that in Bengal Frenchmen would be allowed on commercial business only. French and English acknowledged Muhammad Ali as "lawful Nabob of the Carnatic and Salabat Jang as lawful *subah* of the Deccan."

In this third Karnatik war between the French and English the commanding position of the latter in Bengal had practically decided the issue. They possessed superior resources, a naval base in India, and a great military commander of high prestige and varied experience of Indian conditions. They were supported, moreover, by superior naval strength, a thriving Company and a great War-minister.

Against the Dutch at Chinsura, who had intrigued with Mir Jafir, Clive was equally successful. A fleet of seven ships from Batavia entered the Hughli in November 1759, seized some British ships and landed some troops. Clive captured the fleet and defeated the troops, enforcing complete submission and payment of damages.

In February 1760 he sailed for England. His career had been attended by some pecuniary transactions, the only excuse for which is that the doctrine of prize-money and presents was general in that age. We must acknowledge, too, that though naturally bold, open and direct, he had on one occasion resorted to a treacherous device which has left a stain

on his name. But his successes had been won by his dauntless resolution. The empire of which he laid the first foundation was not, on reflection, desired by his masters the Directors. If they could they would have evaded, and in fact for some time they did their best to evade, the heavy and indefinite responsibilities with which Siraj-ud-daula's attack on Calcutta and all its consequences had invested them.

PART II—FROM PLASSEY TO 1861

IX

THE REGULATING ACT

In the last chapter were traced the occurrences which led up to, and the consequences which followed on, one pregnant event.

In this chapter are reviewed the further circumstances which produced assumption by the British Crown and Parliament of active authority over the territorial acquisitions of the East India Company.

The period that intervened between Clive's departure to England in February 1760 and his return to Calcutta on May 3, 1765, was one of masterless confusion in Bengal. The nominal rulership of the province was three times transferred by majorities of the Presidency Council at Calcutta from one Nawab to another with large profits to the king-makers, who were merely a small oligarchy of merchants constantly quarrelling among themselves, without any direct responsibility for the civil administration, served by subordinates poorly paid yet recently possessed of wide opportunities for gain. Such opportunities were exploited not only by merchants and writers claiming special privileges, but by other Europeans, by native agents, and by natives pretending to be agents of privileged persons. The plunder that resulted was exposed by Warren Hastings, then a recently appointed Member of Council, in a letter of bitter protest in which he strongly endeavoured to impress on his colleagues the harm that was being done to "the Nabob's revenues, the quiet of the country and the honour of our nation." But Vansittart, the Governor, was weak and could do nothing against a dominant majority actuated by a desire for gain. Military officers naturally despised such authority. Indiscipline in the army grew apace and culminated in mutiny of a Sepoy battalion suppressed by Hector Munro on the eve of the Battle of Buxar, and, later on, in another mutiny of English officers, which was quelled by Clive himself.

The miserable policy of the majority of the Calcutta Council was in 1763 interpreted by a headstrong agent at Patna in such a fashion as to provoke a violent collision with Mir Kasim, the Nawab Nazim of the day, which after some fighting resulted in a massacre of Europeans at that place and the flight of Mir Kasim into the territory of Shuja-ud-daula, Nawab Wazir of Oudh, who in April 1764 advanced on Bihar and Bengal with an army 30,000 strong, including a corps of about 5,000 Afghan horse, who had served under Ahmad Shah Durani, and eight field-pieces manned by European renegades and deserters, as well as powerful batteries of heavy guns. The Nawab Wazir was attended by his titular suzerain Shah Alam, still a wanderer from Delhi. After prolonged negotiations the combination was routed with heavy loss, at Buxar on the border of Bihar, by Major Hector Munro at the head of 7,000 men, of whom 857 were Europeans, assisted by 20 field-pieces. The battle lasted from nine till noon. Munro lost 847 killed and wounded, but won a complete victory. Shah Alam at once came to terms; but Shuja-ud-daula retreated into his own country and only submitted when the Company's troops had followed him there and, capturing Allahabad and other important places, had entered on the wide plains of the present United Provinces.

The substitution of Mir Kasim for Mir Jafir, his father-in-law, had been attended not only by the cession of the Bengal districts of Burdwan, Midnapore and Chittagong to the Company, but also by the payment of large presents of money to the Governor and some of his Council. Mir Kasim was now a fugitive; and Mir Jafir was reinstated, but died shortly afterwards, bequeathing a large sum of money to Clive. A deputation from the Presidency Council then visited Murshidabad and concluded a treaty with Najum-ud-daula, a son of Mir Jafir, who, succeeding his father, surrendered the exercise of his authority to a Naib (Deputy) Nawab Nazim to be nominated by the Company. The Deputy's headquarters would be Murshidabad. Exemption from payment of inland customs of the private trade carried on by the Company's servants, a privilege indefensible in itself and conducive to the abuses which had caused the breach with Mir Kasim, was to continue; and sums of money were presented by the new Nawab to the members of the deputation. This scandalous transaction had hardly been completed when Clive, now raised to an Irish peerage, returned to Calcutta on September 6, 1765.

There were many among the Directors who resented both

his proposals to Pitt and the jagir which he had accepted from Mir Jafir; but the Company's shareholders insisted that Clive, and Clive alone, could save a rapidly deteriorating situation.

He came as Governor and Commander-in-Chief with full discretion. He could nominate a select committee of four members of his Council who on emergency would take command of the situation, regardless of their eleven colleagues. He found the public services, civil and military, anxious to become rich quickly, tainted with a corrupt and undisciplined spirit. His own Council was no better. It consisted of merchants, some of whom were chiefs of particular factories where they exercised absolute power. Vacancies in the higher ranks of civil servants left by early retirements and the massacre at Patna had been filled by young men, some of whom were trading with borrowed money and sharing profits with Hindu or Armenian merchants to whom their names and privileges were valuable.

The civil administration of the Nawab Nazim had practically broken down. The compact districts into which the province had originally been divided had long ago dissolved into parganas (sub-divisions) ruled in a confused fashion by powerful zamindars, who maintained unruly levies and were themselves kept in semi-submission by detachments of the Nawab's irregular troops under the command of *faujdars*.[1] Disorder was rapidly increasing when Clive supplanted all these levies by three of the Company's sepoy regiments and further supported the civil administration of the Deputy Nawab Nazim by nine *pargana* battalions specially raised to meet the emergency.

. He also carried out the orders of the Directors prohibiting acceptance of presents without special permission and forbidding all inland traffic on the part of their servants, while allowing the continuance of private trade to far eastern ports or from port to port in India. As compensation for these restrictions Clive granted a monopoly of the salt-trade to be confined to the superior servants of the Company, civil and military, in graduated shares. His own share of profits was devoted to providing for the members of his personal staff for whom other provision did not exist. The Company received a substantial percentage; but the system was palpably objectionable, and after two years was superseded by a practice of allowing commissions on collections of revenue. Clive

[1] Commandants.

pointed out to the Directors that the real remedy for malpractices and corruption was to raise the salaries of their servants; but the former insisted on regarding the latter mainly as merchants who should look for remuneration to profits from private trade.

We now come to Clive's settlements with the Emperor Shah Alam and the Nawab Wazir of Oudh. After the Battle of Buxar the former had begged to be taken under the protection of the British Government. He had appointed by patent Najum-ud-daula Nawab Nazim of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. Clive now arranged that the imperial share of the revenue (or tribute) from the province should be £260,000 guaranteed by the Company, who, in order to discharge their responsibility, would hold the office of Diwan (Fiscal Controller) offered to Clive from Delhi some years before. This office included a jurisdiction in civil and financial cases. The title of the Company to all their territorial possessions was confirmed by imperial patent. Shah Alam indeed was still an exile from his own capital, but he was titular Emperor; and the acquisition of the Diwani gave a superficial authority to the position of the Company in Bengal.

Shortly afterwards the new Nawab, in return for a yearly pension of £54,000, surrendered the conduct of administration to two Deputies nominated by the Calcutta Council, retaining an armed force to be used for little more than parade purposes. The Company appointed the new Deputy Nawabs, who, according to the plan approved by the Directors, collected revenue for them while governing for the Nawab through the old staff of officials. The arrangement was a makeshift. It gratified the desire of the Directors to avoid responsibility for governing, but they were soon to learn that this responsibility could neither be avoided by fictions nor delegated to puppets.

Clive's domestic reforms were carried out in spite of bitter opposition from members of his Council. His jagir, his acceptance of presents from Mir Jafar after Plassey, his large share of profits from the salt monopoly, were all cast in his teeth both then and later on in England. He justified his acceptance of the jagir and presents by his remarkable services, by the customs of India, and by the absence in former days of prohibitive orders from home. His salt profits were used to provide for members of his personal staff, for whom no other provision existed. But his position was prejudiced by such degree of justification as existed for the charges against him.

With the officers of the Army he was brought into collision

by his determination to enforce discipline and by his stoppage, under orders from London, of extra allowances drawn by the troops since Plassey, although due on active service only. He quelled a dangerous mutiny by firm determination, and devoted the legacy which he had received from Mir Jafar into a military fund for the benefit of invalid officers and men and the widows of such as had lost their lives in the Company's service.[1] He reorganised the Bengal army, dividing it into three brigades. He carefully inculcated on its officers the all-importance of friendliness and sympathy with their men, as well as of discipline. They must possess a good colloquial knowledge of the languages. He had been himself, in his own words, ever careful "to entwine his laurels round the opinions and prejudices of the natives." By his sympathy as well as by his military genius he had earned the loyalty of his Sepoys.

As an indemnity for his invasion of Bihar, Shuja-ud-daula paid £500,000 and ceded the districts of Kora and Allahabad to the landless Emperor, entering into a defensive alliance with the Company and engaging to pay for their troops when he required them. This alliance served both parties in good stead in after-years, initiating a system of protected buffer States which finally found its way over the mountains of the north-west frontier.

In January 1767 Clive left India for ever. His health had completely broken down. His work remained. The defects indeed of his Diwani settlement were already visible. It was a temporary and an unsatisfactory expedient; but he was not in a position to devise a better. The Company did not desire to govern Bengal; and the Company's civil servants of that day were neither numerous nor trustworthy, nor equipped by training for administration. By his alliance with Oudh, Clive secured the military position in Upper India for some time and enabled the Calcutta Government to assist Madras when the latter was pressed by formidable enemies. By his determination to limit British conquests to Bengal and Bihar he earned and received the gratitude of the Company.

The five years which divided his departure from the accession of Warren Hastings to the Governorship of Bengal revealed unmistakably the urgent need of better administration in that province. A premature cessation of the autumnal rains of 1769 caused a wide failure of crops, and an appalling famine followed. Large numbers of the population were

[1] Forrest's *Clive*, vol. ii, p. 318.

swept away; and one-third of the agricultural land fell out of tillage. Shortness of specie and varied currencies, lack of roads and transport, stoppage of trade, official incompetency and callous rigour in revenue collection, aggravated the situation.

In September 1769 the total balance in the Calcutta treasury was £3,482 and the whole reserve in the treasure-chests was only £46,179. About the same time the Governor-in-Council at Madras was insistently begging for pecuniary assistance.

In Madras too there was a double government. The "northern circars" and particular seaports were under the Presidency Government. The Karnatik was ruled by Muhammad Ali Nawab of Arcot. Established in power by the agreement of 1755 between the rival Companies, Muhammad Ali had been in 1763 recognised by the Treaty of Paris as "lawful" Nawab of the Karnatik. He was informed of this by a European adviser and encouraged to indulge in dreams of wider sovereignty than was warranted by his origin or by his feudatory position in the Moghal Empire. He sent agents to England, and in order to finance them, borrowed money largely, sometimes from servants of the Company, making his debts chargeable on his provincial revenues. Organising through his agents parliamentary and other interest, he obtained the deputation of an ambassador to his Court, in the shape of the commander of a frigate who became a thorn in the side of the Madras Government.

The Karnatik was menaced by the Peishwa's horsemen, to whom it had long been a happy hunting-ground, and by Haidar Ali the ruler of Maisur, a Muslim military adventurer of Punjab extraction, who had attained to supreme authority in this offshoot of the bygone Vijayanagar Empire, imprisoning the titular Hindu monarch. Haidar Ali had fought for Lally in the recent war and was eager to extend his dominions. To the north of Maisur and the Karnatik were the dominions of Nizam Ali, who had succeeded Salabat Jang as Subadar of the Deccan and had been annoyed by the Imperial ratification of the Company's possession of the Northern Circars, but had been pacified by the offer of a defensive alliance which was translated into action when he was attacked by Haidar Ali. Shortly afterwards, however, the two combined in assailing the British. Confused fighting followed, which ended in peace with the Nizam in 1768 and with Haidar Ali in 1769. The Company were committed by treaty to help the restless ruler of Maisur if he were attacked. In 1770 he was assailed by the

army of the Peishwa, who demanded arrears of *chaut.* He asked for British assistance. His request was bitterly opposed by Muhammad Ali and was rejected. He was defeated, lost some territory and vowed revenge. The unenviable position of the Madras Government between this dangerous enemy and two faithless allies was aggravated by extreme need of money. They had depleted their own and the Bengal coffers. Funds were lacking both for investment in India and for remittance to England. It soon appeared that Bombay was as destitute of wise guidance as Madras.

The need of a strong central authority was urgent. This visible fact, lack of money and reports from Calcutta, induced the Directors to reconsider their avowed policy of "asserting no authority over native officers." The time was past when they could remain merchants and nothing more. Simultaneously the enemies of Clive, both among the Directors and among the corrupt civil servants whom he had expelled or forced to resign, were using for their own ends the impression current among the political public in England that fortunes had been recently made in India with suspicious facility, and that this circumstance was not unconnected with the declining prosperity of the Company. In 1772 a climax was reached when the Directors applied to Lord North, then Prime Minister, for the loan of £1,000,000 from the State. A Select and a secret Parliamentary Committee were appointed, who reported the large sums received as presents by the Company's servants and established the necessity of bringing the administration of the Company's territorial possessions under control of Parliament. Resolutions were framed in the House of Commons to the effect that all acquisitions made under the influence of military force or by treaty with foreign princes belonged of right to the State, and that Robert Lord Clive had received sums of money amounting to £234,000, but at the same time had rendered "great and meritorious services to his country." The latter resolution resulted from an effort vigorously made by certain members of the House to arraign Clive for his conduct in the past, to which he vigorously replied from his place in the House of Commons.

The reports of the two committees led to enactments, by one of which the Government met the financial embarrassments of the Company, who would in future submit half-yearly accounts to the Treasury. The other was the Regulating Act of 1773, entitled "An Act for establishing certain regulations for the better management of the affairs of the East India Company

as well in India as in Europe." The passing of this Act marked the formal beginning of British-Indian constitutional history.

Its main provisions were as follows:

(*a*) A Governor-General and four councillors were to rule over the Presidency of Fort William. They were to hold office for five years and were in the meantime to be removable only by the Crown on the representation of the Court of Directors. The first Governor-General and Councillors were named in the Act.

(*b*) The Governor-General and Council were to be bound by the votes of a majority present at their meetings. Should divisions be equal, the Governor-General would have a casting vote.

(*c*) The supremacy of the Bengal Presidency over the other Presidencies was expressly declared. The Governor-General and Council were to control Madras, Bombay and Bencoolen in Sumatra (subsequently handed over to the Dutch in exchange for Malacca and Dutch establishments in India). The subordinate Presidencies would not be able to make war on or negotiate a treaty with any Indian prince or power without the previous consent of the Governor-General in Council, except in emergent cases when postponement of such action would be dangerous, or in cases where special orders had been received direct from London.

(*d*) The Governor-General and Council were to obey the orders of the Court of Directors, who within fourteen days of receiving letters or advices from them were to transmit to the Treasury " copies of all parts relating to the Company's revenue, and to transmit to a Secretary of State copies of all parts relating to the civil or military affairs and government of the Company."

(*e*) The Crown was empowered to establish by charter a supreme Court of Judicature at Fort William consisting of a Chief Justice and three puisne judges to be appointed to the Crown. The jurisdiction of this Court will be described in my next chapter.

(*f*) Liberal salaries were provided for the Governor-General, Members of Council and Judges of the Supreme Court.

(*g*) Acceptance of presents was prohibited. Concern in private traffic on the part of civil servants employed in revenue collection or the administration of justice in the presidency of Fort William was also forbidden. Provision was made to prevent other abuses.

The Act stood towards the legislation of later years in " the

same relation as did the earliest traction-engine to the subsequent locomotive."[1] But it meant that Parliament had shouldered responsibility for the administration of the East India Company. It also reformed the constitution of that body. In spite of certain defects, it was the dawn of better things.

The year in which it came into operation was marked by the death of the man but for whose dauntless courage, personal force and sound judgment there would have been no British Empire in India. Worn by conflicts, assailed by a torturing disease, Clive died by his own hand on November 22, 1774. Thirty years before, he had landed in India a friendless lad of nineteen. Two years later he had seen Madras captured by the French, and from that time onwards had been engaged in fierce struggles which left little time for reflection. Sharer in our mortal weakness, he had not escaped contagion from the surroundings of his time. But he had accomplished marvels. Though stern and imperious, his temper was always under command; and "in a life spent amid scenes of blood and suffering he has never been accused of a single act of cruelty. He coveted money as an instrument of ambition, but never acquired it in any manner that he did not openly avow."[2] Above all, despite his faults, his ambition was mainly for England. So was it that, in the words of Burke, "he settled great foundations" and "forded a deep river with an unknown bottom."

X

THE FIRST GOVERNOR-GENERAL

On May 11, 1772, a proclamation was issued in Calcutta under orders from the Directors, declaring that the East India Company would "stand forth as Diwan," would itself administer the fiscal system and dispense civil justice in the province of Bengal. The new administration was launched by the Governor at Fort William, Warren Hastings.

This remarkable man had landed originally at Calcutta in 1749 at the age of seventeen, fresh from Westminster School and a few weeks of mercantile training. Seven years he had passed in copying invoices and appraising silks and muslins. Then came soldiering; and afterwards diplomatic work, for

[1] Lyall, *Rise of British Dominion in India*, p. 179.
[2] Mountstuart Elphinstone.

which his tact, patience and acquaintance with the vernacular languages peculiarly fitted him. Always he had played an honourable part. Rising to a membership of Council, he had boldly combated corruption; and when, after some years of rest in England, he returned to India in 1769, he was appointed to the Council at Madras. In 1771 he was promoted to be Governor in Bengal. It is apparent from some sentences in a congratulatory letter that even Clive had failed to gauge the resolute quality of his character. "I thought I discovered in you a diffidence in your own judgment and too great an easiness of disposition, which may subject you insensibly to be led where you ought to guide. . . . A proper confidence in yourself and never-failing hope of success will be a bar to this and every other evil that your situation is liable to."

From April 13, 1772, to Octoger 29, 1774, Hastings was Governor at Fort William. His cares were confined to Bengal. His colleagues were fellow-servants of the Company who worked with him loyally. Together they laid the foundations of efficient administration, foundations on which Cornwallis afterwards built. In 1769 the Presidency Council of Governor Cartier had established British "supravisors," to report on all matters connected with the assessment of land revenue. These men and the members of Boards of Revenue which sat at Murshidabad and Patna to control them, while devoting considerable attention to private trade, had assumed a quasi-sovereignty which was supported by the pargana battalions and overshadowed the authority of the Deputy Nawabs. The latter raised as much revenue as they could by annually farming out the land with little or no regard to vested interests. The administration of justice and police, except in the neighbourhood of Murshidabad, was in the hands of zamindars or such faujdars as could function. The country-people were oppressed by the officials and terrorised by bands of truculent robbers (dacoits), who were frequently in league with the zamindars and punished with death all who informed against them. So long had this state of things existed that the profession of dacoity (gang-robbery) was largely hereditary.[1]

In obedience to orders from home, Hastings called the Deputy Nawabs of Bengal and Bihar to account for embezzlement. They were, after prolonged enquiry, honourably acquitted, but the Governor-in-Council at once abolished the dual system of which they were victims. The "supravisors" were converted into collectors with direct responsibility for the

[1] Hastings's letter to the Revenue Board, August 3, 1773.

administration. They were controlled from Calcutta instead of from Murshidabad and Patna. Farms of the land-revenue were arranged for five years as a temporary measure; and steps were taken to collect information which should enable systematic revenue administration to be evolved from chaos. Civil and criminal courts of justice were established; and drastic measures were taken against dacoits, Hastings holding that " a rigid observance of the letter of the law is a blessing in a well-regulated State, but in a Government loose as that of Bengal is, and must be for some years to come, an extraordinary and exemplary coercion must be applied to remedy those evils which the law cannot reach." [1]

Later on, when, as we shall see, he became powerless in his own Council, the administration of Muslim criminal law was for a short period restored to a reinstated Deputy Nawab. Others too of his arrangements were modified or altered; but he had begun the great work of establishing good government in Bengal. He caused a manual of Hindu civil law to be prepared by learned Brahmans in Sanskrit and translated into English and into Persian, the language of the law-courts. He proposed also to use the digest of Muhammadan legal pronouncements which had been compiled by order of Aurangzeb. It was important, he thought, to remember that " Indian customs, even if injudicious or fanciful, are interwoven with Indian religions and are therefore revered as of the highest authority."

His frontier-policy was at first determined by the following circumstances. On the borders of Oudh, Clive's buffer-state, predatory powers were fighting over the remnants of the Moghal empire. On Oudh's north-west frontier lay Rohilkhand, a broad and fertile territory between the Ganges and the forests at the foot of the Himalayas, inhabited mainly by Hindus but held in subjection by a recently established colony of Afghan settlers known as Rohillas (hill-men). Rohillas had fought at Panipat for the Afghans and at Buxar for Shuja-ud-daula. They were a warlike, restless confederation of petty chiefs. In 1772 Rohilkhand was forcibly occupied by Marathas. Fearing invasion of his own border, Shuja-ud-daula, accompanied by a contingent of the Company's troops, marched to the rescue. He executed a treaty with the leading Rohilla chief, engaging to expel the invaders by peace or war, and to repeat the process if they returned. His recompense would be forty lakhs of rupees paid within three years. The Marathas then retired from Rohilkhand; but again approached in 1773,

[1] Bengal Revenue Consultations, April 19, 1774.

when they were turned back by a demonstration of Oudh and British troops. The Nawab Wazir unsuccessfully demanded payment of the agreed reward.

On the south-west also the Marathas were menacing Oudh. They had received from the Emperor a formal grant of the districts of Korah and Allahabad which had been taken by Clive from the Nawab Wazir and made over to Shah Alam. In spite of the earnest remonstrances of the Calcutta Council, in 1771 that luckless potentate had left Allahabad and allowed the Marathas to escort him to Delhi, where he remained an absolute puppet. Hastings therefore formally discontinued the Bengal tribute, which had not been paid since the Famine; being determined not to pay it to "a mock king, the idol of our own creation, . . . the tool of the only enemy we have in India who want but such aids to prosecute their designs even to our ruin." Meeting the Nawab Wazir at Benares in September 1773, he arranged to restore Allahabad and Korah to Oudh on payment of fifty lakhs of rupees. The consideration was raised to this sum from forty-five lakhs in consequence of a separate agreement engaging for the loan of Company's troops for the conquest of Rohilkhand which Shuja-ud-daula desired to annex, in order to secure the Ganges as a barrier against Maratha invasion. He thoroughly distrusted the Rohillas and desired to force them to pay the stipulated forty lakhs. In addition to the extra five lakhs for Allahabad and Korah, he would pay the Company a large subsidy.

Hastings, although attracted by the strategic and financial advantages of the scheme, hesitated, but finally assented and obtained the approval of his Council. The united forces invaded Rohilkhand early in 1774, and defeated the Rohillas after a stiff fight, killing their chief and breaking their power. Rohilkhand was added to Oudh; but the British Commander, Colonel Champion, complained bitterly of cruelties committed by the Oudh troops after the battle. It seems possible that he might have done more to prevent such outrages; but he was in a subordinate position which allowed him merely to suggest or protest. And the loan of a brigade to join in attacking a power with which no British quarrel existed was both opposed to orders from home and morally wrong. Undoubtedly, however, Hastings had strong reason to be anxious for the security of the buffer province. In correspondence he emphasised the financial benefits of the transaction, probably in order to recommend it to the Directors.

We must now review briefly that period of intense trial

which was to establish Hastings's title to greatness. By the Regulating Act he became Governor-General of Bengal with partial responsibility for affairs in Bombay and Madras. His colleagues, who, like himself, were expressly named in the Act, were Barwell, a servant of the Company, General Clavering and Colonel Monson of the King's Service, and Philip Francis, recently a clerk in the War Office and now the reputed author of *The Letters of Junius*. Clavering, Monson and Francis took office with strong prejudices against Hastings. Clavering was notoriously pugnacious and was possessed of considerable court and parliamentary influence; Monson, also a soldier, followed in his wake; but the ablest of the three was the rancorous and vindictive Francis, whose " plotter-like habit of thought and conduct " [1] had been acquired through years of use of the pen for personal objects. He conceived himself sent by the Prime Minister to " save and govern " India, and was undoubtedly a man of great ability and of a sense of public duty which he frequently subordinated to personal animosity. The constitution of the Council, which reduced the Governor-General to the resource of a casting vote, should divisions be equal, gave the majority immediate command. They acted at once without regard to the baneful consequences which necessarily succeeded open discord in the highest places.

On October 19, 1774, simultaneously with the new Councillors from England, the Chief Justice and the three puisne judges of the Supreme Court established by Royal Charter under the Regulating Act landed at Calcutta.

While in defining the powers of the Governor-General in Council the Act had said nothing about the source of those powers, about the Moghal Emperor or the King of England, it had empowered the latter to establish a Supreme Court of Judicature by Charter; and the charter itself had provided that the Court should administer the criminal law of England, " as nearly as circumstances permit," to residents of Calcutta and its subordinate factories, " and to all British subjects and their servants resident in Bengal, Bihar and Orissa." Technically, therefore, natives of Bengal resident outside Calcutta and the subordinate factories were held to be under Moghal rule. The civil jurisdiction of the Court was to extend to the East India Company itself and all European and British subjects resident in the three Provinces, and every other person who, either at the time of bringing an action or at the time when the cause of action accrued, was employed by the Com-

[1] Parkes and Merivale, *Life of Francis*, vol. ii, p. 416

pany " or any other of our subjects." All such could be sued in the Supreme Court by anyone. The law to be administered was not specified. Apparently it was to be English law. When we remember that this Court, with its vague jurisdiction, deriving its authority from the Crown of England, presided over by judges unacquainted with India, was enthroned in Bengal at a time when the Provincial Government, having drafted a code of regulations designed to conform to the usages and institutions of the people, was labouring to establish courts of its own amid chaotic surroundings, we see how inevitable were the various troubles which followed.

The Chief Justice, Sir Elijah Impey, has been pilloried by Macaulay on slender evidence. He had been a schoolfellow of Hastings, and in later life had led on the western circuit.

Clavering, Monson and Francis began by instituting a rigorous enquiry into the Rohilla War in a manner which necessarily produced violent friction. They insisted on recalling Hastings's agent from Lucknow, the Oudh capital. From Shuja-ud-daula they demanded immediate payment of the stipulated fifty lakhs; and on his death in January 1775, against the strong protests of Hastings, they forced on the new Nawab, Asaf-ud-daula, a treaty increasing materially the monthly subsidy paid for the standing assistance of Company's troops and ceding the suzerainty of the Benares feudatory State. As Hastings said, " Nowhere is the art of depressing a falling interest better understood than in India," and the ruin of the Governor-General seemed assured.

A Bengali Brahman named Nand Kumar, notoriously his enemy, immediately accused him of corrupt practices before the complacent majority; and a long struggle began. Its stages are marked by the trial and execution of Nand Kumar for forgery in 1775, the deaths of Monson and Clavering in 1776 and 1777, the duel with Francis in 1780. Although there is no proof of connection between the first of these events and Nand Kumar's charges against the Governor-General, such connection was certainly assumed by Indian opinion, and all accusations against Hastings ceased. The death of Monson enabled him to use his casting vote. The death of Clavering assured his predominance. But Francis was able at first to influence Clavering's successor; and the long discord only closed with the duel which preceded the former's departure. Hastings had won at last; but the struggle had been very injurious to the public interests. The period had been marked by another contest.

The Governor-General's Council and the Supreme Court were long at variance through uncertainty on both sides as to the extent of the Court's jurisdiction. Frequent and discreditable disputes resulted. Hastings held that the only remedy was to place the Chief Justice over all the Company's Courts with a large extra salary. He carried out his idea; but it was disapproved in England and Impey was recalled before he could draw any salary. By an Act of Parliament passed in 1781 the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court was defined more clearly. The Company's Courts, and Governor-General-in-Council as such, were exempted therefrom.

Hastings worked under "a constitution made up of discordant parts." He rendered account to the careless Lord North, and to masters largely dominated by commercial considerations. He held office at a time when England was beset by enemies, when her American Colonies were in revolt, when on one occasion French and Spanish fleets entered the English Channel, on another sea-borne supplies to India were arrested by the presence of a powerful French squadron off the Coromandel coast. He was called on to finance long wars against formidable enemies on each side of the peninsula, to guard against attack in Upper India and to organise good administration in Bengal. The wars in Southern India were produced by circumstances which he was generally unable to control.

Hardly had he become Governor-General when, without his knowledge, the Government of Bombay embarked on a war.

Affairs at Poona had been unsettled since the day of Panipat. Three Peishwas had died, and the power of the holder of the office over the chiefs of the Maratha confederacy had much declined. The last Peishwa Naraim Rao had been murdered, and succession was in dispute between his uncle and his widow, as regent for his posthumous son. The widow was in the hands of certain Brahman ministers led by the acute and far-seeing Nana Farnavis. Hostilities began; and the uncle Raghunath Rao turned to Bombay for assistance. Without asking for sanction from Calcutta, the Bombay Government, on March 7, 1775, executed the Treaty of Surat binding themselves to support Raghunath Rao with troops in return for a monthly subsidy and the cession of the island of Salsette and the port of Basseim, which they had long coveted as necessary to the security of Bombay. Both had years before been taken from the Portuguese by the Marathas; and hearing that the former were making an effort to recover them, the Bombay Government had in January 1775 organised an expedition

which captured Salsette. The combined forces of Bombay and Raghunath Rao engaged the Regency army; but after some stiff fighting the war was stopped by orders from Calcutta which were two and a half months on the way. The war was denounced; but the Bombay Government was ordered to adhere to the demand for Salsette and Basseim. Negotiations began between the Supreme Government's envoy and the Regency Ministers, which after some time ended in a treaty which ceded Salsette but abandoned the cause of Raghunath Rao, much to the chagrin of Bombay. Then a despatch from the Directors approving the Treaty of Surat complicated matters and encouraged Bombay to obstruct fulfilment of the new settlement. The Poona ministers were equally evasive, quarrelled among themselves and entertained a French emissary—a step which led to a change of policy at Calcutta.

In December 1777 a representation from Bombay that a repetition of wars and intrigues similar to those stirred up by Dupleix was imminent and must be avoided was approved by the Governor-General's Council, but only by the casting vote of Hastings. He decided to send a strong force across India to the assistance of Bombay. It arrived under Colonel Goddard, in time to save a somewhat desperate situation produced by a rash offensive movement undertaken by the Bombay Government with the object of placing Raghunath Rao on the Peishwa's seat. They had been expressly ordered not to attack without positive orders. Goddard restored their fortunes; but his force was small, and, after long campaigning and the outbreak of a separate war with Maisur, the British were glad to make peace first with Mahadaji Sindia, the most powerful of the Maratha Confederates, and then with the Regency ministers. By the Treaty of Salbai (1782), Salsette became definitely British. All European establishments except Portuguese were excluded from the Peishwa's dominions. Raghunath Rao was pensioned off by Poona; peace with the Marathas was secured for twenty years. But in the meantime Hastings had been called on to contend with another formidable power.

The perverse folly of the Madras Government had provoked Nizam Ali, Nizam of Haidarabad, to unite with the Maratha regency and Haidar Ali of Maisur against the British. But the Governor-General-in-Council by conciliation induced him to abandon his hostile attitude. In 1780, however, Haidar Ali, relying on Maratha and French support, invaded the Karnatik with fire and sword, drawing a line of merciless

ravage round Madras. The Nawab's troops were worthless; the British force was scanty; and on September 10 a detachment, under Colonel Baillie, was overwhelmed. Then, in spite of his preoccupations elsewhere, the Governor-General despatched Sir Eyre Coote, Commander-in-Chief, with treasure and reinforcements from Calcutta. Coote was long hampered by wretched equipment and lack of supplies, but in July 1781 at Porto Novo he inflicted a signal defeat on Haidar Ali. He had not, however, the means to prosecute his victory vigorously; and in 1782 a French naval squadron under Suffren, a brilliant admiral, reached the Coromandel coast. Five naval actions followed with indecisive results and supplies from England were interrupted.

In December 1782 Haidar Ali expired, disappointed at the results of his enterprise. Some of his subjects were in revolt, and the Marathas had proved disappointing allies. He could, he exclaimed, ruin British resources on land; but he could not dry up the sea. He regretted that he had chosen the wrong friends. Shortly afterwards Coote died, worn out by excessive trials. Haidar's son and successor Tippu came to terms with the Madras Government in March 1784, some time after the conclusion of peace between England and France; but the Treaty of Mangalore was the certain precursor of further war. Hastings saw this; but the Directors were anxious for peace.

It was under the heavy financial stress caused by these dragging wars that Hastings was impelled to demand large sums of money from Chait Singh, Raja of Benares, and Asaf-ud-daula, Nawab Wazir of Oudh. The demands led to incidents which have been debated in detail from that time to this. Here it must suffice to say that while some of these incidents show the fine courage and coolness of Hastings, his inflexible tenacity of purpose in what he believed to be public interests, others reveal a certain laxity of principle inspired by extraordinary difficulties, and fostered by the surroundings and influences amid which his public life had from a very early age been passed.

He desired "to reconcile the primary exigencies of the Company's government with those which in all States should take the place of every other concern, the interests of the people" subjected to its authority. He was sure that "attention, protection and forbearance"[1] would lead the people of Bengal to a high level of national prosperity. He regarded

[1] Hastings's words.

them with affection. In their languages, customs and religions he took a keen interest. He was not anxious to enlarge the British " circle of defence," or to involve the Company in hazardous or indefinite engagements. He wished to extend and exalt British influence in India, largely by connecting chief princes such as Shuja-ud-daula of Oudh with the Sovereign of Britain.

Such aims could only be achieved under a " consistent and undivided " form of government administered by a Governor-General with such powers as were afterwards given to Cornwallis. For Hastings there were merely the constant struggles at his own Council-board, the financial and political emergencies provoked by the perversity of partially subordinate Governments and England's wars elsewhere, the obstacles of every sort and kind. From the home Government he rarely received anything in the nature of support. He was alone except for the hearty love and loyalty of the great majority of his own countrymen in India and for the admiration and respect which he inspired among the people of Bengal. By heroic patience and resolution he saved the empire won by Clive. For the faults and errors which can justly be laid to his charge he paid the heaviest penalty. The cruellest accusations were brought against him. To adopt his own language on the occasion of his impeachment, not only his actions, but his words and even his imputed thoughts underwent such a severity of investigation as would suit only a mind possessing in itself an absolute exemption from error. " And from whom," he added, " is this state of perfection exacted ? From a man separated while yet a schoolboy from his native country, and from every advantage of that instruction which might better have qualified him for the high offices and arduous situations which it became his lot to fill."

As Sir Alfred Lyall finely writes of this great Englishman, " He saw not only the sea of troubles, which encompassed the English in India, but the calm and open waters that were to be reached by resolute and skilful navigation. So long as he could keep the vessel's head straight on to the point to which he had set her, neither waves nor wind, nor a mutiny on board, could wrench the helm from his straining hands. His own business had latterly been rather to save the ship than to sail it ; and he did save it at all personal hazards, risking his reputation freely as men risk their lives in a storm."

XI

NON-INTERVENTION

In the year 1782 came peace with America. Peace with France followed, and continued for some years. England had leisure to pay attention to the course of events in India, which had been sufficiently remarkable to excite unusual curiosity. Francis had arrived in London and was preparing to renew hostilities against Hastings with fresh weapons and on a new field. He succeeded in enlisting the sympathies of Burke and others who distrusted the policy of the Company, and saw that a noxious influence from India was threatening English public life. "Our laws," said Pitt, "have with a zealous care provided that no foreigner shall give a single vote for a representative in Parliament; and yet now we see foreign princes not giving votes, but purchasing seats in this house, and sending their Agents to sit with us as representatives of the nation. No man can doubt what I allude to. We have sitting among us the members of the Raja of Tanjore and the Nawab of Arcot, the representatives of petty Eastern despots; and this is notorious, publicly talked of and heard with indifference; our shame stalks abroad in the open face of day; it is become too common even to excite surprise."

In 1781 Indian affairs were considered by two Parliamentary Committees. Burke was president of one. Both reported adversely on the system of administration in India; and in 1783 Fox laid a Bill before the Commons which, if carried, would have changed the whole constitution of the East India Company and transferred its patronage to the Government. It was defeated in the House of Lords through the intervention of King George III, and thus occasioned the dismissal of the Fox and North coalition Ministry. Pitt assumed office, and in 1784 introduced a Bill which in effect transferred the supreme direction of Indian civil, political and military affairs from the hands of the Company to those of the Governor-General and the President of a Board of Control, leaving patronage and commercial matters to the Court of Directors. The Bill became law and cleared the way for a great administrative and political advance.

The new Board of Control, to which the Directors were subordinated in all but commercial matters and patronage, consisted of one of the principal Secretaries of State, four

Privy Councillors and the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Their powers were in practice soon exercised by their President, the senior member other than the Secretary of State or Chancellor of the Exchequer. Their secret orders were communicated to the Court of Directors through a secret committee of three elected members of that body. The Court of Proprietors were disabled from annulling or suspending any resolution of the Directors which had been approved by the Board of Control. But in fact they retained considerable power over their Directors; and the latter, through their patronage and their friends or representatives in Parliament, were able to exert no small influence over the Board of Control in other than commercial matters.

The Governor-General's Councillors would in future be three in number, including the Commander-in-Chief, who in precedence ranked next to the Governor-General. The latter would have a casting vote in the event of an equal division of those voting. The Councils of the Governors of Madras and Bombay were similarly constituted, the local commanders-in-chief taking the place of the Commander-in-Chief in India, unless the latter were present. The Governors-in-Council were definitely subordinated to the Governor-General-in-Council in matters of war, revenue or "transactions with the country powers."

The Act contained a provision designed to prevent expansion of territory and secure neutrality in outside quarrels. It declared that "to pursue schemes of conquest and extension of dominion in India are repugnant to the wish, the honour and the policy of this nation." The Governor-General in Council was therefore prohibited from making wars, or treaties for making war or guaranteeing the possessions of any country, prince or State, "except when hostilities had actually been commenced, or preparations had been actually made for the commencement of hostilities, against the British nation in India, or against some of the princes of States dependent thereon, or whose territories were guaranteed by any existing treaty."

The system of Government established by this Act remained substantially unaltered until 1858 except in one important particular. In 1786 Lord Cornwallis declined to accept the office of Governor-General unless his authority were enlarged. The Governor-General was therefore empowered by Act of Parliament to overrule the majority of his Council in special cases and to act on his own responsibility. The Act further

enabled the offices of Governor-General and Commander-in-Chief to be combined in one person.

A year after the return of Hastings from India, Burke moved in the House of Commons for papers relating to incidents of his administration. It is impossible here to narrate the story of his impeachment and trial of seven years. Elaborate efforts were made to depict him as a criminal tyrant. He was stoned with coarse and undiscriminating abuse. At last he was acquitted, but at a cost which almost beggared him. A compromise between the Company and the Government allowed him to receive considerable pecuniary relief from the former and, after years of peaceful retirement, to die in 1818 in an honoured old age. He rests in a small village churchyard beside his devoted wife, to whom, he recorded, it was due that for years he had been able "to maintain the affairs of the Company in vigour, respect and credit."

The prosecution of Hastings was conducted in a spirit which ensured the "lame and impotent conclusion" lamented by Burke. But it vindicated the first Governor-General from many aspersions and it quickened the national sense of responsibility for what was done in India. We owe this salutary outcome to the passionate persistency of Burke.

The career of Warren Hastings was so remarkable, his personality affords such wide ground for fruitful study, that the eye is idly bent on him who enters next. Yet the administration of Charles Earl Cornwallis (1786–1793), if barren of dramatic incident, was prolific in beneficial measures. The new Governor-General was aged forty-seven and was a soldier of reputation, despite his enforced surrender to Washington at Yorktown. He was also a man of very high character, who accepted office with reluctance and only when empowered to overrule his Executive Council should occasion demand. He enjoyed the fullest confidence of Parliament. In short, he possessed the status for which Hastings had often sighed in vain. He arrived at Calcutta in September 1786 and took charge from Sir John Macpherson, who had been the senior member of Hastings's Council.

Acting on instructions from the Directors, and assisted mainly by John Shore, a distinguished civil servant, Cornwallis carried out the famous "permanent settlement" which fixed for ever the land revenue to be paid by the zamindars of the districts then included within the regular jurisdiction of the Presidency of Fort William. The Government of India has often seen reason to regret bitterly that, as Shore recom-

mended, the figures of demand were not fixed for a particular period, that in technical language the settlement was not "temporary," for the finality of the assessments has cut the public revenues off from all share in the profits which have accrued from a great rise of rents and spread of cultivation. But it is clear that, at the time, in spite of grave defects, the permanent settlement tended to inspire confidence in the stability of the new Government.

Developing the plans of Hastings, Cornwallis assumed full charge of the maintenance of law and order and placed the whole administration of civil and criminal justice outside the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court, in the hands or under the control of the Company's civil servants. The Bengal Presidency was divided into districts; a collector was appointed to each district to conduct its fiscal affairs, and a judge and magistrate to keep order and administer the Muslim criminal law with such alterations and modifications as seemed imperative to British ideas.

Thus the fiscal divisions, which had become disintegrated and scattered in the process of development, were converted into compact districts resembling the "sarkars" of Akbar. The Provinces of British India are now divided into districts, each under district officers otherwise known as Magistrates and Collectors or Deputy Commissioners. These district Officers represent the Government to the ordinary villager; and by far the greater number of the people of India are villagers. The maintenance of law and order among the people depends upon characters of individual district officers as well as on that of the Government which they represent.

Cornwallis reformed the currency, abolished inland transit duties, improved police arrangements. All these were his reforms in the Presidency of Bengal. His principle was to place the administration in the hands of British officers. The law which they administered would be, as designed by Hastings, the Hindu and Muslim law relating to marriage, succession, inheritance and caste, and the Muhammadan criminal law anglicised by regulations of the Governor-General-in-Council.

He further insisted on generous salaries of fixed amounts for civil servants, who were in no circumstances to derive income from commissions or perquisites. He allowed no jobbery from England. "I must freely acknowledge," he once wrote in this connection, "that before I accepted the arduous task of governing this country, I did understand that the practice of running persons from England to succeed to

offices of great trust and importance to the public welfare in this country, without either knowing or regarding whether such persons were in any degree qualified for such offices, was entirely done away. If unfortunately so pernicious a system were revived, I should feel myself obliged to request that some other person might immediately take from me the responsibility of governing these extensive dominions, that I might preserve my character, and not be a witness to the ruin of the interests of my country."

Cornwallis arrived from England deeply desirous of peace and non-intervention, entirely averse from alliances. But the firmest efforts cannot win success for a policy which is based upon ignorance or disregard of actual conditions. From the first he was menaced by the bitter fanatical hostility of Tippu of Maisur, who was an object of apprehension to all his neighbours. The Nizam and the Peishwa had joined forces against him in 1786 and had despoiled him of territory and money. But now they dreaded his revenge and wanted British aid. Tippu, on the other hand, sent envoys to Paris and Constantinople. He raged when he heard that Cornwallis, while taking over from the Nizam the district of Guntur under an old treaty, allowed that prince a subsidiary corps of two battalions of sepoys with guns on the understanding that these should not be employed against specified allies of the Company, among whom the ruler of Maisur was not included. Cornwallis moreover stated in his letter to the Nizam that if certain Maisur districts claimed by that prince ever came into British possession, they would be handed over to him. In fact, regarding war with Tippu inevitable, Cornwallis virtually disregarded the terms both of Pitt's Act and of the Treaty of Mangalore.

This was in July 1789, and in the following December Tippu attacked the territory of Travancore, a State under British protection. Then Cornwallis formed a league with the Nizam and with the Peishwa's Government. The combined armies marched into Maisur. Owing to grave defects in commissariat and supply arrangements, the war lasted for some time. Cornwallis himself took the field, but failed in his first advance upon Seringapatam, the enemy's capital. But, making Bangalore his advanced base, he attacked again and captured the outworks of Seringapatam. Tippu then yielded and signed a treaty which exacted a large indemnity and stripped him of half his territory and the suzerainty of Coorg. Additions were made to the dominions of the Nizam and the Peishwa as well

as to the areas of the Madras and Bombay Presidencies. Tippu desperately sought revenge, negotiating with the Marathas, with the Afghans and the French. Immediately before the departure of Cornwallis from India, war broke out between England and revolutionary France. The French settlements in India were immediately seized, but the Isles of Bourbon and France still afforded a convenient base for French naval operations.

Fully aware of Tippu's revengeful designs, Cornwallis endeavoured to secure the future by reducing to explicit and permanent form those articles of the original treaty of alliance between the Company, the Nizam and the Peishwa which provided that the contracting powers should guarantee to each other, against any future attack from Tippu, the territories of which they stood possessed at the conclusion of the late war. Nizam Ali readily accepted the Governor-General's proposals. He retained the subsidiary corps of Company's troops which he had employed since 1789 and earnestly desired additional protection. But Nana Farnavis, the chief of the Peishwa's ministers, desired the Allies to recognise a claim on Tippu for chaut on the part of the Peishwa. This pretension Nizam Ali at once rejected with excellent reason. It found no support in the recent Treaty of Seringapatam, and was a wholly unjustifiable demand prompted by Mahadaji Sindia, the most powerful member of the Maratha confederacy.

Since playing a leading part in the negotiations which led to the Treaty of Salbai, this chief had intervened in the never-ending struggle at Delhi for mastery over the unfortunate Shah Alam and the remnants of the imperial territories. After desperate fighting he finally retained possession of the Emperor, who had by that time been blinded by one of the contending parties, a Rohilla, named Ghulam Kadir. Mahadaji induced his captive to confer on the Peishwa the title of Supreme Deputy of the Empire and procured for himself the title of Deputy of the Peishwa. He annexed the greater part of the Doab, including Delhi and Agra, granting the Emperor a monthly allowance for support of his family and court. The allowance was irregularly paid and the unfortunate monarch was virtually a poverty-stricken prisoner.

Sindia's regiments of regular infantry were largely trained by French officers; his army was commanded by a Frenchman named De Boigne and was supported by foundries, arsenals and accumulated military stores. It defended his extensive dominions not only against insurgent elements but

against the Sikhs and the chiefs of Rajputana. He would have joined the alliance against Tippu had the Company agreed to assist him against the Rajputs. He was anxious also for effective aid from Nana Farnavis, who was then master at Poona, but could not convince that astute statesman that his ambitions were not selfish. He was certainly inimical to Brahman ascendency in the Maratha Confederacy, which he meant to lead himself. At the height of his power, he died near Poona on February 12, 1794, and was succeeded by his great-nephew Daulat Rao, then a youth of fifteen. Mahadaji Sindia possessed abundant courage and sagacity. His career as a ruler had been over-occupied with war and annexations which left him small leisure for civil administration.

Owing to the Maratha attitude Cornwallis's efforts to secure equilibrium in Southern India fell through. Nor was he successful in dealing with Oudh and the Karnatik. The former State was in danger from Sindia and the Maratha ruler of Berar. The latter was menaced by Tippu and the Peishwa. Both States really relied on the Company's soldiers, and, if deserted, would have been immediately overrun. In both the ruler was feeble; his soldiers were worthless; his officers were corrupt; his authority required constant support. Yet payments to meet the expenses of the Company's subsidiary troops were frequently in arrears. Cornwallis was unable to devise a remedy.

He left India in August 1793 after a successful term of office. He had been forced on occasion, by pressing necessity, to depart from the principles of benevolent neutrality inculcated by Pitt's Act. But he had earned the approbation of his employers, who consoled themselves by imagining that no further step forward would be required, and were gratified by observing temporary tranquillity. He was succeeded by his able lieutenant Sir John Shore, afterwards Lord Teignmouth.

Resolved to observe the letter and spirit of Pitt's Act, Shore steadfastly rejected the supplications of the Nizam for an alliance which would protect him from Tippu and the Marathas. Even when Nizam Ali was menaced simultaneously by both these formidable powers, Shore remained obdurate. Ignoring the palpable fact that the British position in India was and is now always dependent on the opinion which is held of British readiness to stand for friends and against enemies, Shore allowed the Company's late ally to be attacked heavily by a confederate Maratha army. Even the Company's two

battalions which the unfortunate Nizam was subsidising were not allowed to join his camp. He was, however, accompanied to battle by troops under French officers, commanded by Raymond, a French soldier of fortune. In spite of this circumstance, his army, after an indecisive engagement, was surrounded and capitulated in the feeblest fashion. He agreed to a degrading peace on terms which were only partially observed; and returning to Haidarabad furious with the English, increased his French corps and granted land for its maintenance. But for the sudden rebellion of his son he would have quarrelled violently with the Governor-General.

The hands of the Poona Government were weakened by the death of the young Peishwa and disputes over the succession. In opposition to the wishes of the Brahman Ministers, who wanted another infant and a regency, Daulat Rao Sindia declared for Baji Rao, the son of Raghunath Rao, the "old pretender," who was finally accepted and installed as Peishwa by Nana Farnavis. Daulat Rao was then all-powerful. In Upper India his French general Perron, who had succeeded De Boigne, commanded a number of regular brigades, artillery and cavalry, largely officered by Europeans.

Affairs in Oudh and the Karnatik did not mend during Shore's administration; and meanwhile Tippu intrigued, collected his resources, and waited to make his spring. From the north-west Zaman Shah the Afghan menaced Delhi. In 1796 he advanced as far as Lahore. Shore considered that had he gone on to Delhi, the Rohillas and other Indian Muhammadans would have joined him. But dissensions at Kabul compelled his return.

Meanwhile the people of Bengal were steadily advancing to better things. "For thirty years," Shore wrote, "they have been free from wars, in the full enjoyment of peace, without invasion. No molestation is offered to their prejudices; no insult to their religions; and the Government is ever endeavouring to frame new regulations for their happiness. I will not affirm that they always approve our modes; yet the principles are sound."[1] So far as his special presidency was concerned, Shore governed well. But, as Governor-General, in pursuit of neutrality, he went far to abdicate the position which he had inherited from his predecessor. The authority which he surrendered went elsewhere. It passed to Daulat Rao Sindia and assisted the recuperation of Tippu. It encouraged French intrigue. It taught the lesson "that no ground

[1] *Life of Lord Teignmouth*, by his son, vol. i, p. 285.

of political advantage could be surrendered without its being instantly occupied by an enemy." [1]

Shore was succeeded by a man of widely different calibre, Richard Colley Wellesley, Earl of Mornington, better known by his later title of Marquis Wellesley.

XII

EXPANSION

Sir Alfred Lyall has said that the foundations of the British Empire in India "were marked out in haphazard, piecemeal fashion by merchants; the corner-stone was laid in Bengal by Clive, and the earlier stages were consolidated by Hastings; but the lofty superstructure was entirely raised by a distinguished line of Parliamentary proconsuls and generals." We have now reached the period of the raising of the superstructure. It is far less intricate than the earlier periods described in previous chapters; and considerations of space allow us to do no more than summarise its main features.

Wellesley assumed office at the age of thirty-seven. Considerable experience at the Board of Control had given him insight into Indian affairs. His intellect was cultivated and capacious. He was an intimate friend of the Prime Minister and possessed the confidence of Parliament. But his most valuable equipment was his own ardent spirit and genius for leadership.

On arrival in May 1798 he found a general impression prevailing that the Company's star was waning. French influence, revived and hostile, was active in formidable quarters. In Europe Bonaparte, full of far-reaching schemes, was crossing the Mediterranean to Egypt at the head of a great armament. In India Frenchmen were present at Seringapatam where Tippu was preparing for war; in Upper India where they were strenuously training the forces of Daulat Rao Sindia, the latest custodian of the puppet Emperor; at Haidarabad where they were commanding a corps of 14,000 of the Nizam's soldiers. Turning his eyes on his own resources, Wellesley found the Company's finances embarrassed, its credit low, its troops unprepared, in the opinion of his famous younger brother, then serving in Southern India, "to perform the operations

[1] Sir John Malcolm.

which the crisis of the Company's affairs was likely to require." The soldiers of his subsidiary allies, the Nawabs of Oudh and the Karnatik, were unruly and worthless.

Wellesley lost no time. Causing the Madras army to be reinforced from Bengal, he initiated negotiations with the Nizam which quickly led to the dismissal of that prince's French officers and their replacement by British officers and a stronger contingent of the Company's troops. These measures, carried through without fuss or bloodshed, gave a remarkable turn to the Company's affairs.

Tippu was called on to renounce his French allies. He was informed of the destruction of Bonaparte's fleet in Aboukir Bay, and was urged by the Sultan of Turkey in a letter forwarded through the Governor-General, to resent Bonaparte's invasion of "venerated" Egypt, "the granary of the holy cities Mecca and Medina." But clinging still to hopes of French support and surrounded by foolish counsellors, he procrastinated until at last, on March 5, 1799, the Company's main army under General Harris crossed the Maisur border. Two months later, on May 4, Seringapatam was stormed and Tippu died a soldier's death. He was a bigoted fanatic, grievously oppressive and tyrannical to his Hindu subjects and far inferior in ability to his father Haidar Ali, but he was courageous to the end.

Wellesley annexed part of his dominions and made part over to the Nizam, but restored a State larger than the original Hindu kingdom of Maisur to the ancient royal house. He simultaneously abolished the double government in the Karnatik, which had all along been fertile in embarrassments and misrule. The tract was added to the Madras Presidency, and the Nawab of the day was allowed his title and pensioned off.

With Haidarabad and Oudh Wellesley concluded subsidiary treaties on a new basis which produced large additions to British territory. The expenses of the contingents of Company's troops, necessary to secure both States from internal disorder and outside aggression, would in future be met not from payments which were in frequent arrears but from the revenues of certain districts which would be ceded to the Company. The Nawab Wazir of Oudh would simultaneously disband his mutinous and disorderly troops. His frontier would, as a result of cessions, be divided from that of Sindia by a belt of British territory. He was completely relieved of responsibility for its security, which was believed at that time to be menaced by Afghans as well as by Marathas. But in

fact immediate Afghan peril was dissolving before the rise of a new north-western power.

After the execution of Banda, the Sikhs had been depressed by a vigorous persecution directed by the Muslim officers of the Moghal Empire. But Gobind Singh had given them a distinct political existence and infused a religious and martial enthusiasm which bore increasing fruit as the Moghal power dissolved and Persians and Afghans swept forwards and backwards across the Punjab. There were Sikh villages and Sikh forts, Sikh fights with the invaders. Sikh temples at Amritsar were destroyed by the fierce Durani; pyramids were encased with the heads of fallen Sikhs. But the Khalisa brotherhood grew and multiplied and its members met year by year at Amritsar seeking wisdom and unity from Gobind's holy book. Their association consisted of various *misals* (confederacies) each of which followed its own leader (*sardar*). All Sikhs were horsemen and famous for the use of the matchlock from horseback. Besides the ordinary misals there was a turbulent body of Akalis (Immortals), who acknowledged no earthly governor and claimed to have been instituted by Gobind as armed guardians of the purity of the faith. All Sikhs, however, fought readily both with outsiders for the supremacy of the Khalisa, and among each other for less exalted causes. Their business was war. They were dangerous foes; and when Zaman Shah, the Afghan king, invaded the Punjab in 1797 and 1798 with a force of 30,000, he endeavoured to win the Sikh leaders by soft words. He was recalled by danger at home, and, on retiring a second time, made over Lahore to the Sikh sardar Ranjit Singh, who had attracted his special attention. From that time onward the Sikhs gradually drew together under the leadership of Ranjit Singh, and held the line of the Indus against invaders from Central Asia, thereby unintentionally assisting the development of British power in the Gangetic plain.

Maisur, Haidarabad and Oudh were now secure. The Afghan danger was vanishing. But the Maratha confederacy demanded attention. In Central India there were the territories of Sindia, Holkar and the Raja of Berar, stretching across the peninsula in a broad belt and reaching up into Rajputana and the Gangetic plain, covering Delhi in their sweep, menacing Oudh, Haidarabad and Bengal. These powers were not settled States with fixed boundaries, but rulers of loose and recent acquisitions composed partly of districts held in sovereignty and partly of enforced contributions from other powers. A claim to chaut, once admitted, was enforced by Maratha Brah-

man tax-gatherers supported by Maratha soldiers. The Rajput States, weakened by long internal feuds, had for some time been so persecuted by Maratha persistence that they were on the verge of collapse. Their principal adversaries, Daulat Rao Sindia and Jaswant Rao Holkar, were simultaneously contending for mastery over a weak and tyrannical Peishwa at Poona. Sindia commanded the larger forces, holding, in addition to the original acquisitions of his family, Delhi, the Doab and the person of the titular Emperor, with an army officered largely by Frenchmen and led by Perron, a French general; but Holkar was a born soldier and master of guerrilla tactics.

Warfare between the two culminated on October 25, 1802, in a defeat by Holkar of the combined forces of Sindia and the Peishwa outside Poona. Baji Rao fled, leaving his capital to the tender mercies of Holkar, who extorted and plundered to his heart's content. The Peishwa made his way to Bassein and placed himself under British protection. Wellesley had previously invited him to enter into a defensive alliance, but had found him reluctant. Now he consented, and by the Treaty of Bassein (December 31, 1802) ceded districts yielding a revenue sufficient to meet the cost of a strong subsidiary contingent. He also excluded from his service all Europeans of any nation hostile to the English, and subordinated his relations with other States to consultation with Calcutta. He was conducted back to Poona by a British-Indian force, and Holkar retired toward Malwa laying waste the whole countryside. His army and the swarms of banditti who followed it reduced the Deccan to such depths of misery and want that cows, buffaloes and even human beings are said to have been devoured by the starving peasants.

Wellesley then informed the other Maratha powers that the Peishwa was under British protection. The announcement was strongly resented and led at once to the second Maratha war, which consisted of two phases, the first of which was marked by the fine generalship of Arthur Wellesley and Lake and the notable Battles of Assaye and Laswari. Sindia and the Raja of Berar were thoroughly beaten and ceded wide territories to the Company. The British frontier advanced to the border of the Punjab. The blind Moghal Emperor Shah Alam, who was found by Lake "oppressed by the accumulated calamities of old age and degraded authority, extreme poverty and loss of sight, seated under a small tattered canopy, the remnant of his royal state," [1] was treated with deference and

[1] Kaye and Malleson, *History of the Mutiny*, vol. ii, p. 2 (*n*).

allowed a liberal income from the revenue of certain assigned territory in the neighbourhood of Delhi, which would be administered in his name by a British Resident at Delhi. The Nizam received part of Berar; and Sindia in 1804 entered into a defensive alliance with the Company. His French officers had left his service. His troops had been well equipped and had fought well, but not after Maratha guerrilla fashion, and in pitched battles had been unable to stand before the Company's forces led by generals of high renown.

The second phase of the war was against Holkar, who, after refusing to join the other two chiefs, provoked hostilities on his own account, plundering eventually the territory of the Rajput chief of Jaipur, an ally of the Company. Holkar adopted the old Maratha tactics and inflicted a serious defeat on the incautious Colonel Monson. But eventually he was vanquished by Lake and pursued into the Punjab, whence he returned later to make his submission on easier terms than those which he would have obtained had not Wellesley by then left the country.

Wellesley had not contented himself with leaving no place for French intrigue; but thinking that the policy of Pitt's Act, of Cornwallis, of Shore, was utterly unsuited to existing conditions, he had boldly discarded it. He proceeded vigorously on the contrary assumption that his object should be "the prosperous establishment of a system of policy which promises to improve the general condition of the people of India, and to unite the principal native States in the bond of peace, *under the protection of the British power*." He rejected the feigned security of a future which left British supremacy doubtful and the territories of the Company and its allies liable to be disturbed at pleasure by restless and predatory powers. He was not prepared to proclaim the abolition of the "nominal sovereignty" of the Emperor, which, he wrote on July 13, 1804, was still recognised by "almost every state and every class," and especially by Muslims. But he was resolved that this nominal sovereignty should not be used as an instrument for furthering French or other anti-British designs. He believed that to afford "the King of Delhi," as he called Shah Alam, "a tranquil and honourable asylum and to secure the means of comfort to the numerous and distressed royal family," would conduce to the honour of the British name. He did not consider, evidently because his Majesty's authority was based on tradition and sentiment only, that his claim to be Emperor of Hindustan need be discussed.

It is obvious that to restore effective Moghal suzerainty was an impossibility. Yet every day made it clearer that, without an effective suzerain, India would drift interminably, torn by disruptive forces, until either dominated by French ascendency or overrun once more from Central Asia. The East India Company was the sole power in the country which was in any way likely to evolve order out of chaos and bitter rivalry. To do this, it must establish its supremacy firmly and definitely. It is not wonderful that Wellesley's armies were principally composed of Indian soldiers, that the people of the territories which he acquired readily accepted a change of masters, that the Rajput chiefs were anxious for British protection and believed that this alone could save them. It is certain that Wellesley sometimes, and notably in the case of Oudh, acted in an arbitrary, high-handed manner, but nevertheless the total value of his services to India and to Britain was incalculable. He could never have accomplished so much without the support which he received from the resolute temper of the British Parliament, then at death-grips with Napoleon.

It must be added that his influence on internal administration and on the training of civil servants was altogether vigorous and beneficent. But the large increase in the Company's debt caused by constant military operations and the check at first sustained in the campaign against Holkar led to the withdrawal of the ministerial support which had carried the Governor-General so fast and so far. The pressure of the Company's shareholders and Directors, whom he had never troubled to conciliate, became irresistible. He was relieved by Cornwallis in July 1805, and left India in the following month. His successor was commissioned to revert to the old policy. But in fact Wellesley's policy had accomplished its object. The British Government was paramount. India's territories had been distributed on a plan which for the most part remains unto this day. Her shores were mainly in British hands.

Cornwallis, indeed, who was now sixty-six years old and died within three months of his arrival, declared his intention of removing "the unfavourable and dangerous impression" that the British Government intended to control the various Indian powers; and his policy was followed so literally by his successor Sir George Barlow that not only was the defensive alliance with Sindia superseded by a fresh treaty which restored to him certain territories, but British protection was removed from the Rajput States. The Nizam forthwith began to intrigue with the Maratha powers; but here he was checked



W. & A.K. Johnston, Edinburgh and London.

by the Governor-General, who was relieved in 1807 by Lord Minto, then President of the Board of Control and formerly a manager of the impeachment of Warren Hastings. Minto arrived in India firm on a policy of non-intervention, but felt himself compelled to aid the Raja of Berar against a turbulent robber chief and to insist on the limitation of Ranjit Singh's dominion to the west side of the Sutlej. Between that river and the north-west frontier the Sikh Maharaja was now supreme and his sovereignty there was acknowledged on the condition that he came no nearer British territory.

The mission which negotiated this settlement was designed also to bar the way against a possible Franco-Russian invasion. In 1807 Napoleon had concluded an alliance with the Tsar Alexander I, and still dreamt of an attack on India. His powers were then regarded as almost superhuman, and British missions were despatched to Afghanistan, Sind and Persia. Expeditions from India captured the Isles of France and Bourbon; the Spice Islands and Java were taken from the Dutch, who had become subject to Napoleon. The Cape of Good Hope had been wrested from them in 1806. In 1814 their eastern possessions were restored to them, but not the Cape.

In the year 1813 the Governor-General who was to make a final end of non-intervention arrived in India.

The Earl of Moira, later Marquis of Hastings, an experienced soldier and advanced in years, proved a clear-sighted and courageous ruler. The year of his arrival saw the renewal of the Company's charter for twenty years from April 1814, but the abolition of their monopoly of Indian trade, leaving them, however, the exclusive right to trade with China. When renewing the charter, Parliament required the Directors to spend annually at least £10,000 of Indian revenues on the revival and improvement of Indian literature and the introduction of "the sciences" among the people of British India. The clause which imposed this obligation was the first legislative admission of the right of State education to participate in Indian public revenues. There was then no State system of education in England, and efforts in the direction of public instruction in India made by Christian missionaries and by certain European officials and non-officials had failed either to arrest a general decline of Sanskrit, Arabic and Persian learning, caused by the wars and anarchy of a hundred years, or to foster adequately the indigenous schools in which the rudiments of reading, writing and arithmetic were imparted

to some sons of zamindars, shopkeepers and village accountants. Now, however, largely through the efforts of William Wilberforce, the new Charter Act presented two distinct propositions for the Company's consideration: (*a*) the revival and improvement of the ancient learning, and (*b*) the introduction and promotion of Western sciences. Lord Moira was deeply interested in these matters, but was quickly compelled to turn his attention to even more insistent needs.

The territories of the Company and its allies were increasingly threatened by the Maratha powers. From the chiefs of Rajputana came a loud complaint.

"Some power," they said, "had always existed to which peaceable States submitted, and in return obtained its protection against the invasion of upstart chiefs and the armies of lawless banditti; the British Government now occupied the place of the protecting power, and was the natural guardian of weak States which were continually exposed to the cruelties and oppression of robbers and plunderers owing to its refusal to protect them." Their enemies were not only the Marathas but also the Pindaris (crop-stealers), originally the camp-followers and banditti, who followed in the wake of Maratha armies, recruited their ranks from disbanded soldiery of varied races, and were rapidly increasing in numbers and truculence. Maintaining secret understandings with the chief Maratha powers, these freebooters from time to time raided the territories of the Company and its allies. Their chief leader, Chita, could muster 10,000 horsemen.

But pressing as these matters were, Lord Moira first carried through a war with the Gurkhas of Nipal, Hindu hill-tribes of Mongolian origin who reigned over the highlands and valleys of the southern slopes of the Himalayas. The war was provoked by Gurkha raids on British territory and ended in the Treaty of Sagauli (1816), whereby a long stretch of hill-territory was ceded to the British, and a British resident was received at the Gurkha capital Khatmandu. Ever since Nipal has been a trusty friend and has contributed some of the finest soldiers in the Indian army.

Then Lord Moira, who had become Marquis of Hastings, turned his eyes on the Pindaris, whose latest exploit had been an incursion into some districts of the Madras Presidency, where they had killed, plundered and tortured far and wide. He decided to deal once and for all with these ruffians and their sympathisers. Negotiating with the Maratha powers, he concluded alliances with the Muslim ruler of Bhopal and the

various Rajput States. Simultaneously he mobilised an army of 120,000 with 300 guns. He was his own Commander-in-Chief, and prepared wide and sweeping operations. Between September 1817 and January 1818 he constrained Sindia to sign a treaty engaging to assist the Company's forces against the Pindaris; he crushed Holkar's troops; he annihilated the organised Pindari bands and induced the remnants to settle down to a peaceful life. Within the same months the Peishwa, Baji Rao, who had for some time been preparing treachery, assembled a large force and attacked the British Resident Mountstuart Elphinstone and a small British contingent, but was beaten off with heavy losses and defeated in subsequent engagements. In June 1818 he surrendered, was deposed and sent off to live on a large pension at Bithur, a village on the bank of the Ganges above Cawnpur. His office was abolished and his dominions were annexed, with the exception of a small area round Satara which was made over to the latest descendant of Sivaji.

The Maratha Raja of Berar and Nagpur, who had also joined in the fray, was deposed and ceded considerable territory. Holkar was dealt with less severely.

The work of Wellesley was thus completed. The British Government was supreme in India outside the Punjab and Sind. Under the wise and considerate administration of Mountstuart Elphinstone the people of the Peishwa's dominions readily accepted the new dispensation. The surviving Maratha powers desisted from demands for blackmail and settled down within demarcated boundaries. The Rajput States were definitely saved. In all British territory annexed since the beginning of the century district administration was introduced and law and order were established. In the Madras Presidency Sir Thomas Munro, having no zamindars or middlemen to deal with, settled the land revenue with cultivators and occupiers. In the present Agra Province temporary settlements were made with resident proprietary communities. Cornwallis's permanent settlement with zamindars was not extended beyond its original limits.

In the time of Lord Amherst, the successor of Lord Hastings, military operations, originally purely defensive, were undertaken against the Burmese, who had committed various acts of aggression and were threatening Bengal. In 1825 they were driven from Assam and from hill-States on the north-eastern frontier of India; and in 1821 a force sailed for Rangoon, and, after various vicissitudes, brought the enemy to terms. By

the Treaty of Yandabo (1826) Assam and two of the sea-board provinces of Burma were ceded to the British. An indemnity was paid. A British protectorate over certain eastern States on the north-eastern frontier of India was recognised. That frontier was thus secured.

It is obvious that no military victories could, by themselves, have achieved the remarkable expansion of British dominions which has been briefly narrated in this chapter. An onlooker's explanation is before us in the words of Abbé Dubois, a French missionary who between the years 1792 and 1823 travelled and lived among the people of the Deccan and Southern India, wearing their dress, and trusted by men of all castes and conditions. He says that the ease with which a great dominion had been established in India by a European Power had filled the people of India with admiration and seemed "almost miraculous." But the phenomenon was easily comprehensible if one remembered that in the past Indian rulers had been despotic and oppressive. "Never did the fall of one of those despots cause the least regret; never did the elevation of another cause the least joy." The Hindus considered themselves lucky enough if their religious and domestic institutions were left untouched by those who by good fortune or force of arms had got hold of the reins of government.

The system of government adopted by the English was another reason for the acceptance of their rule; "their effort and anxiety to make the people less unhappy than they had been hitherto; above all their inviolable respect for the customs and religious beliefs of the country"; and lastly, "the protection they afforded to the weak against the strong." All these "had contributed to the consolidation of their power more than their victories or their conquests."

Another key to the causes of a revolution which was largely effected by Indians themselves is given by the words of Sir Dinshaw Wacha, spoken not long ago in the Imperial Council-chamber; "What was justice in the time of the Moghals? What was justice in the time of the Mahrattas? I appeal to my countrymen never to forget when we talk of law and justice that we are indebted to Englishmen for these invaluable boons."

XIII

THE DAWN OF MODERN PROBLEMS

Lord Hastings had secured peace in India. The Treaty of Yandabo had carried the British flag beyond the Bay of Bengal. For a time expansion ceased. But the administration of Lord William Bentinck (1828–1835) was pregnant with far-reaching consequences. To understand its achievements we must remember that the period was one of political change in England, change which contributed to inspire the ideas of the Governor-General himself and of such thoughtful and prescient servants of the Company as Metcalfe and Mountstuart Elphinstone. A small section of Indians, too, was touched by the spirit which prevailed in England.

It will be useful to form some clear impression of conditions in British India at this time. Travelling extensively in 1824–5, Bishop Heber observed general tranquillity in British territory. Yet the Government only employed military force in affairs of real war, or where active and competent police were clearly insufficient to provide for the public safety. Visiting Benares, the sacred city of the Hindus, Heber found that the military had been called in only once in the past twenty-five years, on account of a religious riot between Hindus and Muhammadans which would have resulted in the extermination of the latter had not this step been taken. At the same place the Bishop enquired which Governors of India had stood highest in Indian opinion. He found that "they usually spoke of Warren Hastings and Lord Wellesley as the greatest men who had ever ruled in this part of the world, but that they spoke with most affection of Jonathan Duncan" (a civil servant of the time of Cornwallis). Duncan Sahib's younger brother was still the usual term of praise applied to any public man "who appeared to be actuated by an unusual spirit of kindness and liberality toward their nation." Of Warren Hastings many traits were preserved; and a nursery rhyme, often sung to children, seemed to show their pleasure "at the Oriental (not European) pomp which he knew how to employ on occasion."

Heber describes the people of Upper India as generally well affected to the Company's government. But something yet remained of the days when "no man was sure that he might not at any moment be compelled to fight for his life or property." The people were still of lawless and violent habits,

and everyone found it desirable to take his arms with him on a journey. When Heber travelled in a caravan from Allahabad to Cawnpore all his servants were armed with spears, and some had " added sabres of the largest growth." The Bishop found Rajputana molested only by lurking gangs of marauders, relieved from apprehension of " the annual swarm of Pindaris who had robbed, burned, ravished, enslaved, tortured and murdered " in times past.

In Calcutta, which had been for some years a centre of Christian missionary and Western-educated Hindu activity, he noticed " an increasing disposition to imitate the English in everything, which had already led to very remarkable results and will probably lead to results still more important." Wealthy Indians drove the best horses and the most dashing carriages. In their newspapers English politics were canvassed " with a bias to Whiggism," and a leading man had given a big dinner recently in honour of the Spanish revolution.

Bentinck was a soldier and diplomatist of considerable experience who had been Governor of Madras from August 1803 to September 1807. He had resigned in consequence of the dissatisfaction of the Directors with his conduct of affairs in connection with a tragic mutiny of Sepoys at Vellore. But he had proved himself a good financier; and in 1827 the Directors were seeking for such a man. He succeeded to a deficit; and so carefully did he economise that he left a surplus of £1,500,000. Perhaps the most notable of his retrenchments was that resulting from a widely increased employment of Indians in the subordinate magistracy and judiciary. He also initiated a new thirty years' revenue settlement in the North-western (now the United) Provinces which yielded substantial increment to the State finances.

But it is as a humanitarian that Bentinck conferred indelible benefit upon India. In absolutely prohibiting the self-immolation of Hindu widows on the funeral pyres of their husbands he saved many a poor woman from a horrible fate, and put a stop to *sati*, a practice revolting to enlightened Hindu thought but tolerated by his predecessors from reluctance to interfere with usages sanctioned by religious custom. In suppressing *thagi* (cheating) he broke up gangs of hereditary robbers and murderers who, seeking propitious omens from the Hindu goddess Kali (of strength or destruction), sought and slew numerous unsuspecting victims on highways and byways.

The latter portion of Bentinck's administration was affected by the passing of the Government of India Bill of 1833 through

the British Parliament. The Company's charter was due for renewal; and, as usual, renewal was preceded by the enquiries of a Select Committee appointed by the House of Commons "to make recommendations as to future policy." The following were the most important provisions of the Act which resulted from the report of this Committee:

(*a*) The sovereignty of the Crown was definitely asserted over the Company's territories, which were declared to be held "in trust for His Majesty."

(*b*) The Company would no longer be allowed to engage in any kind of trade. It would be simply a governing agency.

(*c*) The Governor-General of Fort William in Bengal became "the Governor-General of India in Council." The Council would be strengthened by a "Legal member" entitled to sit and vote only at meetings convened for legislative purposes. Macaulay, afterwards the historian, was the first "Legal member."

(*d*) Legislation had until then taken shape in regulations framed by each of the three presidency-governing Councils. Much confusion had resulted. It was now provided that laws should be enacted by the Governor-General in Council only, who would receive expert assistance. Law-Commissioners, too, were appointed to regulate the courts and codify the penal and procedure law on English principles, paying "due regard to the rights, feelings and peculiar usages of the people."

(*e*) The Presidency of Bengal would still remain under the control of the Governor-General-in-Council; and it was not until twenty years later that it was given a Lieutenant-Governor of its own.

A new Presidency of Agra was arranged, but eventually it became a Lieutenant-Governor's charge under the title of the North-western (later the United) Provinces.

(*f*) A section of the Act declared that no native of India, by reason only of religion, place of birth, descent, colour, or any of them, would be disabled from holding any office or employment under the Company.

By a despatch dated December 10, 1834, the Directors endeavoured to give effect to the policy of this Act. Natives of India were, they wrote, to be admitted to places of trust as freely and extensively as regard for the due discharge of the functions attached to such places would permit. Fitness would be the criterion of eligibility. In order that natives of India might become fit and able to compete for the public service with a fair chance of success, every design tending to

their improvement was to be promoted, "whether by conferring on them the advantages of education or by diffusing on them the treasures of science, knowledge and moral culture." It must, however, be remembered that "it is not by holding out incentives to official ambition but by repressing crime, by securing property, by ensuring to industry the fruits of its labour, by protecting men in the undisturbed enjoyment of their rights and in the unfettered exercise of their faculties, the Governments best minister to the public wealth and happiness."

In pursuance of the policy laid down in this despatch, Bentinck declared on March 7, 1835, that the great object of the British Government ought to be the promotion of European literature and science among the natives of India. Up to that time Christian missionaries had been the chief pioneers of Western learning. But now its advancement would be the policy of Government. This decision was largely inspired by a famous minute of Macaulay's and closed a long controversy between Westerners and Easterners. Both schools quoted the Charter Act of 1813. Both held that the vernaculars were not yet developed sufficiently to be used as the media of Western knowledge. The question was whether "the sciences" were to be diffused through English or through Sanskrit, Persian or Arabic ? [1] It is not surprising that the advocates of English won, but they too desired that the vernaculars should be properly taught in all schools and looked forward to a time when through these tongues Western knowledge and modern science would be widely diffused. They considered that if, meantime, Western education were spread through English at State expense among the higher classes, it would filter down to the masses ; and accepting this view, which proved fallacious, the Government left indigenous vernacular schools to their own devices, and devoted its energies to the promotion of secondary (English) education. The same object was zealously pursued in Christian missionary schools and colleges.

In such circumstances, and assisted by the fact that in 1837 Persian, inherited from the Moghals, ceased to be the language of the law-courts, a knowledge of English spread rapidly at and near the big sea-ports, confining itself to the clerical, professional and trading classes, the descendants of the clerks accountants, physicians and merchants of Moghal days. The martial and landed classes generally held aloof from the new learning, which inevitably pushed Sanskrit, Persian and Arabic

[1] Calcutta University Commission Report, p. 35.

into the background and was therefore repugnant to the teachers of the Hindu and Muslim scriptures. From that time to this it has mainly partaken of a literary character, exercising memory above other faculties and stimulating imagination. Its influence was further extended by the removal of Press restrictions carried out by Bentinck's successor, Sir Charles Metcalfe, but prepared by Bentinck's toleration of all newspaper comments.

Government control of the Press dated from Wellesley's days, when the Indian seas were infested by French privateers. Regulations then passed restricted publication of naval and shipping intelligence. Other regulations were made by Lord Hastings and again in 1823 by Mr. Adam, his temporary successor. Adam's regulations ordained that every newspaper published must receive a licence from Government, which could be revoked at pleasure with or without enquiry or notice. The principle of which these regulations were the extreme exponent is apparent from evidence given by Mountstuart Elphinstone to a Parliamentary Committee in 1832. "If the press be free we shall be in a predicament such as no State has yet experienced. In other countries the use of the press has gradually extended along with the improvement of the country and the intelligence of the people; but (in India) we shall have to contend at once with the more refined theories of Europe and the fanaticism of Asia, both rendered doubly formidable by the imperfect education of those to whom every appeal will be addressed."

Bentinck, however, in practice allowed liberty to the press, and Metcalfe, his successor, abolished all restrictions, holding such abolition requisite, whatever might be the consequences, in the interests of the spread of "the enlightened knowledge and civilisation, the arts and sciences of Europe." By this step Metcalfe lost the confidence of the Directors.

Bentinck was reluctant to interfere with any Indian States, but was compelled to depose the Raja of Coorg, a monster of cruelty, and, by the desire of the inhabitants, he annexed that small country. He also annexed Cachar, on the north-east border of Bengal, from which the Burmese had withdrawn; and he deposed the Hindu Raja of Maisur for incapacity and misrule. For fifty years Maisur was administered by British officials.

In 1832 a commercial treaty was concluded with Ranjit Singh, the ruler of the Punjab; and in 1834 a convention was negotiated with the Amirs of Sind for opening the waters

of the Indus to Indian merchants and traders. The object of both agreements was partly political. Bentinck was anxious to associate the Punjab and Sind with British India in defence of the line of the Indus against invasion from Central Asia. He further wished to fortify this rampart by a friendly Afghanistan, a security which, from the position of that country, must always be "a cardinal point of the whole Asiatic question" to the rulers of India.

Afghanistan has well been described as a star of valleys radiating round the peaks of the Koh-i-baba Range and everywhere bounded by rugged mountains. The chief boundary range is the Hindu Kush. The eastern part of the country is represented by the towns of Kabul and Ghazni, the western by Kandahar and Herat. "Kabul," wrote Sir Alexander Burnes in 1841, "owes its importance more to its position, which is centrical for commerce, than to its being the seat of government; and it has therefore stemmed with success the various revolutions which have disturbed the peace of Afghanistan. Invigorated as it is by this advantage of position, there are few places of the East better adapted for commerce. Its political, although inferior to its mercantile, advantages are enhanced by them, since Kabul has a rapid and regular communication with the countries adjacent. And as to the abundant resources of foreign lands, it has not the wealth, nor has it the exuberant production of India or even Bokhara, but it possesses a race of people far more hardy than the inhabitants of either of these regions, who have, for the last eight or nine centuries, enabled the rulers of Kabul to overrun the surrounding countries."

It may be said of the little people of Afghanistan generally that they are as warlike and fanatical a race as is to be found on the face of the earth. They are now separated from India by tribes of their Muslim co-religionists, able, if combined, to raise some 130,000 well-armed fighters; and in Bentinck's days the Sikh Empire of Ranjit Singh, extending over the Punjab and Kashmir, and the small province of Sind under Amirs of Baluchi extraction, also interposed.

The founder of the Afghan nation, as it exists to-day, was Ahmed Shah Durani, the victor of Panipat. When he died in June 1773 he had consolidated the Afghan tribes into one people. First reigning at Kandahar, he had added Kabul and Ghazni to his kingdom and wrested Herat from Persia. The epitaph on his tomb records that "the ears of his enemies were incessantly deafened by the noise of his conquests." His

son, however, lost much of these. One grandson was Zaman Shah, who menaced India in Lord Wellesley's time, but was recalled to his own country by rebellion, was driven from his throne and was blinded. Another was Shah Shuja, who ruled with the assistance of an able minister, Wazir Ali Khan, also a Durani but of a different clan. Shah Shuja too was overthrown, and in 1816 took refuge in British territory. For some time Afghanistan was rent by civil strife, and eventually Dost Muhammad, a brother of Wazir Ali Khan, became King of Kabul. In 1834, however, Shah Shuja tried but failed to recover his throne. He returned to Ludhiana in British territory on the boundary of Ranjit Singh's kingdom. That monarch had given him money with the approval of the Governor-General.

Bentinck left India in 1835 after six useful and prosperous years. An interregnum was filled by Sir Charles Metcalfe, whose tenure of office was, as we have seen, signalised by the removal of all restrictions from the press. After the arrival of Lord Auckland, the new Governor-General, a cloud on the north-west horizon, at first no bigger than a man's hand, began to overspread the sky. Lord Auckland was a worthy man, without commanding qualities, who proved totally unequal to perplexing responsibilities.

By the Treaty of Turkman Chai (1828) the complete control of the Caspian and two provinces of Persia had passed to Russia. Persia had lost a war in which she considered herself entitled to British aid under the terms of a treaty signed in 1814, after negotiations undertaken to baffle the schemes of Napoleon. From 1828 Tehran passed under Russian influence.

In 1834 Muhammad Shah, King of Persia, decided to seek compensation for Persian losses to Russia in an enterprise against Afghanistan, and to attack Herat, then under the rule of Shah Kamran, a nephew of Shah Shuja. It must be understood that Dost Muhammad reigned over Kabul only. Kandahar was under certain of his brothers. Another brother had been ruler of Peshawar, formerly part of the Durani Empire, but had lost it to Ranjit Singh in 1834.

Herat has been called "the gate of India," because within the surrounding tract great roads to India converge. Both the Kandahar chiefs and Dost Muhammad were reported by the British ambassador at Tehran to have made overtures to Persia for partition of the Herat district. In 1836 Dost Muhammad, renewing overtures previously made to Lord William Bentinck for intercession with Ranjit Singh in favour

of the rendition of Peshawar, was told that the British Government could not interfere. He then despatched an emissary to St. Petersburg. In April 1837 he made a dash upon Peshawar, but was driven back. In September 1837 Captain Alexander Burnes entered Kabul as special envoy from Calcutta. His task was to win Kabul and save Herat from Persia and Russia. In November a Persian army besieged Herat; and in December Witkewich, a Russian envoy, arrived at Kabul.

Burnes soon found that unless he could promise Dost Muhammad that the Governor-General would press Ranjit Singh to give up Peshawar, his mission must be hopeless. He left Kabul on April 26, 1838. Witkewich remained. The siege of Herat caused vague unrest in India. The Government became alarmed and were stimulated by communications from England, where it was considered that Dost Muhammad was inclined to Persia and Russia. In June and July a "Tripartite Treaty" was signed by Ranjit Singh, Shah Shuja and the Governor-General. Shah Shuja was to be restored to the throne of Kabul, although his whole career had been a failure and Burnes had reported that Dost Muhammad was an able and popular ruler, adding, however, that Shah Shuja could be restored easily by British intervention and thus greatly underrating Afghan patriotism. It was decided to employ the Company's troops on this restoration, a policy approved in a despatch of the Secret Committee of the Court of Directors which arrived in India on January 16, 1839, when war with Dost Muhammad had already been declared, and a British army was on its way to Kabul through Sind and the Bolan Pass "to establish permanent British influence in Afghanistan." The enterprise was all the more unfortunate as in September 1838 the Persians had raised the siege of Herat, alarmed by the despatch of a British expedition to the Persian Gulf.

The military expedition into Afghanistan was at first successful. Dost Muhammad was defeated; and in August 1839 Shah Shuja was triumphantly conducted into Kabul. Witkewich had long departed. Ranjit Singh had died, and the British communications were endangered by the frontier tribes and by the unsettled state of the Punjab. The restored Amir proved a broken reed. In a short time Afghanistan was seething with rebellion and intrigue, although Dost Muhammad had given himself up and been taken to India.

In November 1841 Sir William Macnaghten, British Envoy at Kabul, was preparing to leave for the Governorship of

Bombay when the city mob rose and murdered Alexander Burnes. Then followed one tragedy after another. Macnaghten was assassinated by Akbar Khan, a son of Dost Muhammad, at a meeting to which he had been enticed. The British force of 16,000 at Kabul began a disastrous retreat under an incapable general in the bitterest winter weather. One hundred and twenty fell into the hands of Akbar Khan as prisoners. Of the rest only one survivor reached Jelalabad on the way back. All others perished. Lord Auckland left India shortly after the news of this supreme catastrophe had arrived; and it fell to Lord Ellenborough, his successor, to gather up the fragments of a mistaken and ill-starred enterprise. Shah Shuja had been murdered by his countrymen; but Generals Pollock and Nott restored the credit of British arms, and on September 16, 1842, the British flag waved once more over the Bala Hissar (palace-citadel) of Kabul. Then the British generals and armies departed and Dost Muhammad returned to his throne. Twenty thousand lives and fifteen millions sterling had been squandered.

The conquest and annexation of the small province of Sind followed shortly after the conclusion of the Afghan War. For this enterprise Lord Ellenborough and Sir Charles Napier were responsible. It was disapproved by the Directors and its sole justification consists of two facts coupled together, that Sind commanded both the mouths of the Indus and the way to the important Bolan Pass, and if not annexed by the Company, would certainly have been seized by the Sikhs or the Afghans. In February 1843 the Amirs of Sind were defeated by Sir Charles Napier at Miani, and afterwards the country was pacified and settled by the same masterful soldier, Khairpur being reserved as a protected State enjoying its own government.

Sind and other matters led to the recall of Lord Ellenborough. Before departing he settled affairs in the Gwalior State of Maharaja Sindia, a minor, where the army had taken command. That force was, however, defeated at Maharajpur and Paniar in December 1843, and Gwalior became definitely a protected State.

It was by Act V of 1843, passed during the administration of Lord Ellenborough, that the legal recognition of slavery, which had existed for centuries in India, was finally abolished. Millions of slaves thus gradually obtained their freedom.

XIV

DALHOUSIE

RANJIT SINGH, "the Lion of the Punjab," had welded a loose and turbulent fraternity into a Sikh kingdom. His co-religionists were in fact a small minority in the Punjab; but the more numerous Hindus and Muslims were leaderless and succumbed to Sikh vigour and enthusiasm directed by a born ruler of men. Ranjit's army contained soldiers of all three religions drilled under the supervision of such European soldiers of fortune as Allard and Ventura, who, with full power over promotion and punishment, made infantry, cavalry and artillery alike efficient. The Sikh Maharaja (great King) wrested Attock, Multan, Kashmir and Peshawar from the Afghans, who were quarrelling desperately among themselves; but, impressed by the victories of Lake, he cultivated friendly relations with the British. He ruled his kingdom with vigour; and making constant progresses, kept a vigilant eye on his sardars and revenue-farmers. Although illiterate, like Sivaji and Haidar Ali, he transacted business with extreme quickness and possessed a remarkably retentive memory. He inflicted punishments of relentless severity, but was easy and pleasant to his intimates. One-eyed, meagre and stunted in body, addicted to sensual indulgence, he was yet a famous fighter, and in battle with the Afghans at Nowshera in 1823, had together with his Akalis, "whom he freely expended in such engagements,"[1] personally determined the fortunes of the day. Within his dominions life and property were far more secure than they had been for a century and more, although the rude justice administered afforded little chance to the poor.

Ranjit proved faithful to all his engagements with the British. But when he died on June 27, 1839, his army took command of the Punjab. One successor after another was murdered, until at last the Khalisa, or Sikh Church-militant, accepted as its nominal ruler Dalip Singh, a child of five, alleged to be the son of the great Maharaja. His mother, the Rani Jindan, became regent; and, aided by her paramour Lal Singh, she sought relief from her embarrassments in urging the all-powerful army to invade British territory. On December 13, 1845, the invasion began.

[1] Henry Lawrence, *An Adventurer in the Punjab*, pp. 127-8.

Sir Henry, afterwards Lord, Hardinge, had succeeded Lord Ellenborough as Governor-General in July 1844. A soldier of high reputation in the Peninsular and Waterloo campaigns, he had sat in Parliament for some years and had served as Chief Secretary for Ireland. Wary, and well-versed in civil and military affairs, he had watched the clouds gather in the north-west and was ready to meet the storm. Meantime he had done much to improve internal administration, had begun to plan an Indian railway-system and had taken measures to suppress sati and infanticide in Native States. Now he was called on to meet the onslaught of an army of 72,000 men with 381 guns. On December 13, 1845, he issued his proclamation of war. It had been, he said, the earnest desire of the British Government to see a strong Sikh Government established in the Punjab, able to control its army and protect its subjects. Now, however, the Sikh army had, without the shadow of provocation, invaded British territories. War was declared because these " violators of treaties and disturbers of the public peace " required punishment.

Not without great exertions and after four pitched battles culminating in Sobraon, fought on February 10, 1846, were the Sikhs driven back over the Sutlej with much slaughter and compelled to yield. Lahore was occupied in the same month; Sikh territory on the British side of the Sutlej was annexed as well as the Jalandhar Doab between the Sutlej and the Beas; Kashmir was ceded; many guns were surrendered; the Sikh army was considerably reduced; but the government of the Punjab was still to be vested in the young Maharaja, or rather in Lal Singh his minister, under the supervision of the British Resident, Sir Henry Lawrence. Kashmir, which had been taken by Ranjit Singh from the Afghans, was now given in subordinate sovereignty to Raja Gulab Singh, chief of Jammu and one of Ranjit Singh's old captains. An amended treaty was executed in December 1846, by which Lawrence, whose noble and chivalrous character was much appreciated by the Sikh sardars, became president of a council of regency and real ruler of the Punjab, assisted by a carefully selected staff of officers, which included his brother John. But when in January 1848 Lord Hardinge went home, after considerably reducing the Company's army in the expectation that " it would not be necessary to fire a gun in India for seven years to come," Henry Lawrence departed too, on sick-leave.

Lord Hardinge was succeeded by the Earl, afterwards Marquis, of Dalhousie, a Scotch nobleman, only thirty-five years

old, who had been President of the Board of Trade and, delicate in constitution, possessed strong sense, determination, high courage and an ardent spirit. He had held office for three months when, in April 1848, the assassination of two British officers at Multan formed the prelude to another desperate Sikh war.

Although Mulraj, the Sikh Governor of Multan, raised the standard of revolt in April 1848, Lord Gough, Commander-in-Chief, postponed military operations to the following cold weather. Theoretically it was the duty of the Regency Government to take action; in fact Lieutenant Herbert Edwardes, employed under that body, had lost no time in collecting what local forces he could and in attacking Mulraj, whom he defeated and drove into Multan. But then operations hung fire; and a regular siege of that place was not begun until September. Rebellion had time to spread and become general. The Sikh leaders obtained the aid of Dost Muhammad of Kabul by offering him Peshawar. On January 13, 1849, was fought the bloody and indecisive Battle of Chilianwala, the news of which in England caused the despatch of Sir Charles Napier to India to supersede the Commander-in-Chief. But on February 21, 1849, at Gujrat, Lord Gough retrieved his reputation by routing the Sikh army finally and decisively. Two thousand Afghans, who had joined the Sikhs, were chased back to their mountains. Multan had already been stormed; and Mulraj had been captured.

Dalhousie decided that no more experiments could be attempted. Annexation was the solution. "If," he said afterwards, "I had not proclaimed a distinct policy of one kind or another, I should have had the whole country in one month in riot and utter anarchy, and harm would have been done which years and years could not have made good. What I have done, I have done as an act of necessity." On March 29, 1849, Dalip Singh resigned all claim to sovereignty for himself, his heirs and successors. But five cis-Sutlej Sikh States, rescued by the British years before from Ranjit Singh, and other trans-Sutlej States, Rajput and Sikh, remain unto this day protected autonomous powers.

The Government of the new province was committed to a Board consisting of Henry and John Lawrence and a civil servant from Bengal who in 1851 gave place to the amiable and courageous Robert Montgomery. The Board presided over a select body of fifty-six British civil and military officers. The people were disarmed. The north-west frontier was

fortified. Roads were made. The land-revenue was reduced. Slavery, thagi and gang-robbery were stamped out; criminal and civil law and procedure, suitable to the ideas and circumstances of the people, was introduced. The province was consummately well governed by able, sympathetic and fearless administrators under three chiefs of the highest character; and the results were marvellous. While the Lawrences differed in some ideas, the elder being inclined to favour the fallen Sikh sardars, and the younger, who was keeper of the Public Purse, inclining to champion the peasants, the Punjab and its officers benefited by the fine qualities of both brothers. In 1853 Dalhousie moved Henry Lawrence to the charge of the Rajputana agency and made John Chief Commissioner. But the memory and influence of Henry remained in the province and contributed to the spirit which animated its chiefs and soldiers in 1857.

In 1851 came a war with the court of Ava as the climax of a long series of insults offered and aggressive acts committed by that barbaric power. The great pagoda of Rangoon was stormed on April 17, 1852; and Pegu, or Lower Burma, was annexed. Control of the eastern coast of the Bay of Bengal was thus secured. The new province was governed with firmness, consideration and complete success.

We can only understand certain annexations of protected Hindu States carried out by Dalhousie if we realise that in his day the orders of the Directors were to avoid actual intervention in the government of Native States generally. If good advice were disregarded, however repeatedly, neither suspension nor temporary forfeiture of governing powers should be resorted to. Wrestling with difficulties arising from this prohibition, convinced that British rule was for the happiness of the people, anxious to push on railways, canals and public works, for the benefit of all India, unable in parts of the country to accomplish this purpose without consolidating scattered British territory, desirous also of obtaining sufficient revenue to finance his schemes of improvement, Dalhousie, in dealing with particular Hindu States, resorted to the doctrine of lapse, or escheat, whereby if natural heirs to "dependent" chiefships failed, the States concerned "lapsed" to the supreme power. "Dependent" States were those which had been created or revived by the grant of the British Government.

In applying this policy he came into contact with Hindu law, which requires adoption of a son, in default of male issue, in order that the father's soul may be saved from hell. If a Hindu

dies without adopting, his widow adopts for him. Adopted sons have all the rights of natural sons; but in those days, if succession to a chiefship were involved, a marked distinction was drawn between the sovereignty, with its attributes, and personal property. Even in the Hindu empire of the Peishwas sanction to succession to the former had been required from the paramount power which protected the integrity of the State and possessed a reversionary right to the government thereof. Dalhousie, applying the principle, with concurrence from home, refused to sanction succession by adoption to sovereignty in cases of *dependent* States, if for reasons of policy he desired annexation. In this way he annexed seven out of several hundred principalities, including three of considerable importance. He proposed to annex an eighth, but was overruled in England.

He further abolished certain empty titles and recommended that on the death of Bahadur Shah, the titular King of Delhi, the dignity should cease and the royal family should be required to quit the palace-fort, which the Governor-General regarded, with accurate prevision, as a stronghold in the possession of a possible enemy. After much argument between the Court of Directors and the Board of Control, the latter only of these two proposals was adopted. There would still be a titular King after Bahadur Shah's death, but he would leave the city of Delhi.

The title of Nawab of the Karnatik was also abolished; and on the death of Baji Rao the ex-Peishwa in 1853, Dalhousie allowed his adopted son Dondu Pant, known to history as "the Nana Sahib," to continue in possession of the Bithur rent-free estate; but in view of the fact that by way of pension the ex-Peishwa had received the sum of more than £2,500,000 sterling and had left a large fortune to his heirs, the Governor-General decided that no pension should be granted to Dondu Pant.

Non-interference had long proved a dreary failure in the case of Oudh. Since the days of Cornwallis and Wellesley, in spite of undertakings to govern with a "view to the happiness of their subjects," the rulers of Oudh had proved an effete and incapable dynasty. To the British Government, however, they had been faithful allies and on occasion lenders of money. In the time of Lord Hastings they had been dignified by the name of Kings. But their domestic administration had gone from bad to worse. In 1831 Lord William Bentinck had warned the King that he stood in danger of being "transmuted

into a pensioner of State." In 1837 Lord Auckland had agreed with the King of his day that "if, which God forbid, gross and systematic oppression, anarchy and misrule, should prevail within the Oudh dominions, such as to endanger seriously the public tranquillity, the British Government would appoint its own officers to carry out the necessary reforms." But native forms of administration would be maintained "so as to facilitate the restoration of these territories to the Sovereign of Oudh" at the right time. This treaty was unfortunately disallowed in London. In November 1847 Lord Hardinge proceeded to Lucknow and warned the King that reforms must be accomplished within two years. Nothing was done. In 1848 Colonel Sleeman, a warm friend of Indian princes, was appointed Resident at Lucknow, and reported of Oudh affairs in such terms as these:

"Three-fourths of the officers commanding regiments are singers, eunuchs or their creatures. . . . They are men or boys who never saw their regiments, and never intend to see them or leave the Court, in whose favour they bask. . . . The troops upon which the collections of the revenue depend are among the worst enemies the people of the country have. They dare not face a formidable landowner (talukdar) or gang of robbers, but are for ever engaged in pillaging the farmers and cultivators of the land, and this with the knowledge of the Government and its officers. . . . The peasantry told me that rebels and robbers did spare them sometimes, when the destruction of their houses and crops was not necessary for their purpose, but that the King's troops, who could not breathe freely in the presence of such men, never spared them."

In 1854 General James Outram, "the Bayard of India," succeeded Sleeman. He confirmed the report of his predecessor, stating that corruption proceeded "link by link from the highest authority to the lowest, the subordinate bribing his superior, and the whole weight at length falling on and crushing the ryot" (peasant).

On June 18, 1855, Dalhousie wrote recommending that the King should be required to vest administration in the Company permanently, but should be allowed to retain his royal rank and title. After much deliberation in London, His Majesty Wajid Ali Shah was offered a treaty to this effect, reserving his jurisdiction, except in capital cases, in his palace and two parks; assuring him of large endowments and maintenance for the collateral members of his family. If, however, he refused acceptance of the treaty, his kingdom would be

annexed. He refused acceptance; and Oudh was annexed on February 13, 1856. The King proceeded with his family to Calcutta to appeal personally to the Governor-General, and if need be to England. On March 6, 1856, Dalhousie left India and so was unable to direct the settlement of the new province. It appears from a later note of Outram's that the annexation was received with joy by thousands of the country people, who declared "that now, for the first time during years of anarchy, they had a prospect of reaping the produce of the fields which they had ploughed and sown." It cannot, however, be doubted that the numerous connections and dependents of the ex-Royal family, the nobles and many Oudh soldiers of the Company's army took a widely different view of the measure.

During the Crimean War Dalhousie was strongly pressed to surrender a considerable portion of his European garrison. He succeeded in preventing a reduction below 37,400 in days when "royal regiments," as distinct from Company's, might be taken away at any time. His convictions on this important question are evidenced by a passage from a letter to the President of the Board of Control, Sir Charles Wood, dated August 15, 1854: "I cannot believe that the Queen's Government would diminish the comparatively small European force in India without any reference to the Government of the country. . . . Our Raj is safe from risk, but only while we are strong. We positively must not be weakened. We have not, like the Colonies, anything to fall back upon. We must be strong, not against the enemy only, but against our population, and even against possible contingencies connected with our own native army." [1] This was at a time when a special circumstance was favourable; for, as he told another correspondent, all the Mussalman population in India, especially on the western frontier, were much pleased because England had taken the part of the Sultan of Turkey. But he realised that the British Government was keeping the peace between many mutually antagonistic sections and was protecting society from a numerically strong and lawless element.

In 1854, through the agency mainly of Herbert Edwardes, Commissioner of Peshawar, Dalhousie concluded a treaty of friendship with Dost Muhammad which resulted in a further treaty signed on January 26, 1857, and largely determined the attitude of the Afghan Amir during the troubles of 1857. In 1857 too an agreement, concluded with the Khan of Khelat, secured Baluchistan.

[1] Lee Warner, *Life of Dalhousie*, vol. ii, pp. 274–5.

Dalhousie championed and pioneered railways, telegraphs, canals, public works, improvements of all kinds. In 1852, before the passing of the last Act which renewed the East India Company's charter, for such time only as Parliament pleased, he submitted his own views concerning the Government of India. Supreme control, he wrote, should still be vested in the Governor-General in Council. "So vast a machine can never be safely worked unless there be unity of authority and of purpose in the direction of it and in the control of its resources." The Governor-General must be able to overrule his Council on emergency.

The Legislature, however, must be reconstructed on a broader basis and must be differentiated from the Executive. The legal element must be strengthened. Proposals were formulated accordingly. One Indian gentleman should be added to the Legislative Council immediately.

The Act, passed in 1853, adopted these proposals with the exception of the last. It further, on Dalhousie's recommendation, embodied a long-needed reform by transferring the administration of the Province of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa from the Governor-General in Council to a Lieutenant-Governor.

A sequel of the passing of this Act was a despatch from Sir Charles Wood on the subject of education, prescribing a scheme partly based on proposals received from Dalhousie, which was launched before his departure. A system of vernacular and English education, on as practical lines as possible, from the primary school to the University, was to be introduced and worked by a department of public instruction in every province. English education had made considerable progress among the Hindu literary or clerical classes since 1835, but had not filtered through to any wider circle.

Dalhousie's last year was clouded by the murder of a valuable civil servant, by a brutal assault on a veteran officer committed by some Muslim fanatics, and by a bloody insurrection of some hillmen. Some of his parting words breathed a strong "presentiment of the eve."

"No prudent man having knowledge of Eastern affairs would venture to predict a long continuance of peace in India. . . . We have lately seen how, in the midst of us, insurrection may arise like an exhalation from the earth, and how cruel violence, worse than all the excesses of war, may be suddenly committed by men who, to the very day in which they broke out in their frenzy of blood, had been regarded as a simple timid race, not by the Government alone, but even by those

who knew them best, who were dwelling among them and were their earliest victims. . . . No prudent man will venture to give you assurance of continued peace. While we may rejoice that measures have been taken for opening new sources of wealth, I trust we still shall feel that all that we have yet done must be regarded as no more than the first beginnings of greater things to come. In regions so vast as these and among interests so various, all progress must needs be gradual."

The "great Proconsul" left India in broken health and died on December 19, 1860, after four years of sickness and sorrow. To the last, in spite of the crash of the Mutiny, he preserved an unquenchable faith that after his death the final issues of his administration would conclusively vindicate his policy. He was impelled by circumstances to complete Wellesley's work of expansion; but simultaneously he paved the way for a progressive India by developing the domestic policy of Bentinck. Certain of his measures raised up bitter enemies and contributed to precipitate a desperate struggle. But this struggle was largely a legacy from other circumstances; and when it came, the results of Dalhousie's dealings with the Punjab and of his energy in improving internal communications contributed very substantially to final victory and a peaceful settlement.

XV

THE MUTINY AND AFTER

In February 1856 Lord Dalhousie was succeeded by Viscount Canning, ex-Postmaster-General, a man of high character and judicial temperament, who was to render noble service to India and England in a time of storm and stress. Before leaving London, at a dinner given in his honour by the Court of Directors, Lord Canning had uttered words which were to prove prophetic: "We must not forget that in the sky of India, serene as it is, a small cloud may arise, at first no bigger than a man's hand, but which growing larger and larger, may at last threaten to burst and overwhelm us with ruin."

He was early bidden from home to declare war on Persia. In 1855 the British minister had left Tehran in consequence of insulting treatment; and in 1856 the Persians had seized Herat. A British expedition was sent from Bombay to the Persian Gulf in October 1856 which, under the command of Sir

James Outram, captured Bushire and inflicted several defeats on the enemy. Peace was made in May 1857. The Shah agreed to relinquish Herat and desist from interference in Afghanistan. This agreement and a further treaty made early in 1857 with Dost Muhammad, as a sequel to the treaty of 1855, procured Afghan neutrality during the dark days which were impending.

It was unfortunate that the annexation of Oudh had come too late to enable Dalhousie himself to select a corps of officers and a chief of high calibre for that province. Outram departed almost immediately after the annexation; and Henry Lawrence's offer to leave Rajputana and serve in his place arrived after a selection had been made. Coverley Jackson, an expert revenue officer from the North-west Provinces, became Chief Commissioner, and proved himself devoid of the breadth of mind and sympathetic insight which the occasion required. Neither to the dependents of the ex-King's Court nor to the Talukdars of the province did he extend kindly consideration. On the contrary, possessed by the creed that the latter were nothing more than grasping middlemen obnoxious to the cultivators, he aimed at concluding a revenue settlement which would oust them for ever from their estates. He was, however, dealing with men who could command large followings and were accustomed to hold their own. Oudh soon began to seethe with incipient revolt. Coverley Jackson wasted energy in quarrelling with his own lieutenants; and when at last, in March 1857, he gave place to Henry Lawrence, irretrievable mischief had been done. At this time there were not 1,000 British soldiers in the whole province, which was ripe for revolt.

We must now consider the mutiny of the Company's Bengal army, which consisted mainly of high-class Hindus and Muhammadans from Oudh and the North-west Provinces, the very heart of the old Moghal Empire. The armies of the Madras and Bombay Presidencies were composed of more mixed material. Of the Madras army, one regiment only showed sympathy with the mutineers of 1857. Certain others begged, and begged successfully, "to be granted an opportunity of proving their faithful attachment to the Government which had cherished them." The Bombay army too remained loyal and contributed to the suppression of the rebellion.

A leading cause of the Mutiny was the opinion of the Bengal sepoys that they were, in their own phrase, "the right arm, the hands and feet of the British Government." The belief

was natural, for of the whole Bengal army, 151,361 strong in May 1857, 22,698 men only were British, of whom 13,421 were stationed in the Punjab. The strength of the Company's three armies was 238,000, of whom 38,000 only, including officers in native regiments, were British. In the vast area between the Punjab and the Bay of Bengal, the proportion of British troops was extremely small. The strategical points and most of the guns were in the hands of the native troops. In the words of John Lawrence, the strength of the sepoys consisted of their great numbers "and their possession of most of our magazines, many of our forts, and all our treasuries, while our weakness consisted in the paucity of European troops. Moreover, while the native regiments were kept up to their full strength, while our already overgrown native army was being gradually increased, it so happened that we had not been so weak for many years past in European troops as we were in 1857. . . . It was a sense of overwhelming power acting upon men exasperated by a fancied wrong that led the Bengal army to mutiny." [1]

The "fancied wrong" was the incident of the "greased cartridges." This brought to a head discontent which had been growing since incidents in the Afghan War, had been fostered by the refusal of extra food-allowances to regiments serving in Sind, and by a general army order of 1856 requiring recruits in future enlisted to swear that they would go wherever their services might be required. Service of Hindus across the sea entailed exclusion from caste for indefinite periods. It happened too that events in Oudh had much annoyed numerous Oudh officers and men in the Bengal army. Lastly, the sepoys were moved by the alarm and unrest which was at that time penetrating the strongly conservative upper classes of Northern India. The clash of Western civilisation and education with Eastern customs and ideas was thus described by Sir James Outram: [2]

"The abolition of infanticide, the introduction of vaccination, the law to legalise the remarriage of Hindu widows, the promulgation through our colleges of the facts of astronomy, geology, etc., so opposed to the priestly cosmogonies of the country, the dissections practised in our medical schools, the attempts to establish female seminaries and to elevate the moral and social position of the female sex, with many other of our efforts to do good, were pressed upon the army and the

[1] Kaye and Malleson, *History of the Mutiny*, vol. v, p. 356.
[2] Lee Warner's *Dalhousie*, vol. ii, p. 355.

masses as so many deliberate assaults on the outworks both of Muhammadanism and of Hinduism. . . . These efforts to prepare the way for a military mutiny and a popular insurrection were much aided by the unsettled state of the public mind, which had been for some time looking forward with vague expectancy to some commotion in which a saviour, or Avatar, would appear. The greased cartridges precipitated the mutiny before it had been thoroughly organised, and before adequate steps had been taken for making the mutiny a first step towards a popular insurrection." There can be no doubt that many Hindus and Muhammadans had conceived the idea that their religions were being deliberately undermined. The proclamation issued by the leaders of the revolt from Delhi and Lucknow appealed to all and sundry with the cry of religions in peril.

The general situation afforded a tempting field for exploiters, of whom there was no lack. There were the Emperor and his courtiers at Delhi, who knew that their days in the palace of Shah Jehan and Aurangzeb were numbered. There was the Maratha Brahman, the "Nana Sahib," burning to take revenge for the discontinuance of his adoptive father's pension, egged on by Azimulla, recently his envoy to England, who visited the Crimea after a British repulse from Sebastopol and had returned to India convinced that British power was waning. There were the numerous dependents and adherents of the ex-King of Oudh. There was the Rani of Jhansi, a Maratha lady of great courage and tenacity of purpose, who resented, naturally enough, the annexation of her late husband's principality and the charging of her pension with liability for his debts. There were others who cherished grudges and worked for revenge. But the most reliable authorities [1] are not agreed as to whether or not any widely organised conspiracy preceded the military risings.

It seems obvious, at any rate, that the match which set fire to much combustible material was the belief of the Bengal sepoys and native officers that the Enfield rifle-cartridges which they were directed to bite had been smeared with the fat of the cow, sacred to Hindus, and the pig, unclean in the eyes of Muslims, for the purpose of converting both alike to Christianity. Unfortunately animal fat had been used at Woolwich for the purpose of making up the cartridges, but this fact was at first unknown and therefore denied in India. Every effort was subsequently made to explain and rectify the

[1] E.g. Outram and Lawrence.

mistake. The order to bite the cartridges was rescinded; the issue of greased cartridges was stopped; but the mischief was already accomplished. Fear, distrust and resentment had done their work. The sepoys were convinced that the destruction of their caste and their religion was immediately contemplated.

Space does not permit us to dwell upon the varied incidents of the Mutiny, which have often been described. Delhi, Lucknow, Cawnpore, Agra, Benares, Allahabad, Jhansi, have each their memories of that terrible struggle; and here and there in Upper India are other places, amid vast distances where handfuls of our race laid down their lives gallantly for England. But some features of the struggle call for comment here.

Owing largely to the masterly and intrepid manner in which incipient insurrection among the Bengal regiments in the Punjab was met and crushed down at once by Robert Montgomery and Brigadier Corbett at Lahore, and by Herbert Edwardes, John Nicholson and Brigadier Sydney Cotton at Peshawar, the extent of the Mutiny was mainly limited to the North-west Provinces, of which Delhi then formed part, and to Oudh. The Punjab administration not only held its own but poured forth succour to Delhi and Lucknow. The Sikhs were not attracted by the prospect of a restored Muslim Empire and appreciated their experience of British rule.

But it was men, far more than memories or reflections, that determined their attitude. Many Sikhs and Muslims of the Punjab, many fighters from the Frontier tribes, were ready to follow such leaders as Nicholson, Edwardes, Hodson and others, wherever they might go. Popular opinion, too, was strongly impressed by the resolute and courageous bearing of the Punjab authorities. "As we rode down to the disarming" (of the sepoy regiments), wrote Herbert Edwardes from Peshawar in May 1857, "a very few chiefs and yeomen of the country attended us, and I remember, judging from their faces, that they came to see what way the tide would turn. As we rode back, friends were thick as summer-flies, and levies began from that moment to come in."

Within the war-area the British, assisted by regiments and levies composed of various Punjab races, by Gurkhas from Nipal, by contingents from the Madras and Bombay armies and by a considerable number of adherents from the mutinous regiments, fought the majority of their old Bengal army, who were supported by all the predatory and riotous elements of

the population, and, after the revolt had achieved its initial success, by such Muslims as desired re-establishment of the Muslim Empire. The Emperor, once more enthroned at Delhi, appealed to political and religious sentiment, and many Muslims forgot that the grandfather of this same Bahadur Shah had been blinded, insulted and confined by his own countrymen when in 1803 Lord Lake delivered him from poverty and misery, and that, if he had become a puppet, it was his own people who had made him one.

In Oudh the Talukdars generally, smarting from recent grievances, joined the rebels.

Throughout the Mutiny area the country people fought zealously among themselves. Sir Alfred Lyall, then an Assistant Magistrate on the spot, has left vivid pictures of the state of affairs. He notes how everybody had been killing his neighbour; the money-lending traders had been stripped; money, cattle, corn, clothes, everything had been taken. In 1857 he wrote: "I can realise exactly what the old life of forage and plunder must have been. Every man does what is right in his own eyes; villages are fighting against villages, Hindu Rajputs against Mussulmans, and petty chiefs starting up in every direction. The Rajputs are the best fighters among the Hindus, but they generally get beaten by the Mahometans, whose worst enemies must confess that they are the most warlike of all. There is something in their religion that makes warriors of them." [1]

The behaviour of the ruling Princes generally does not support the argument that Dalhousie's annexations had inspired them with deep-rooted distrust. The young Nizam and his great minister Salar Jang, Maharaja Jaiaji Sindia of Gwalior and his premier Dinkar Rao, rendered service of inestimable value to the British cause. The chiefs who ruled over the eighteen States of Rajputana were loyal with hardly any exception. The Gaekwar of Baroda, in the words of Lord Canning, "identified himself with the British Government." At Benares, the capital of orthodox Hinduism and the scene of a mutinous outbreak, the Raja of Benares, who, endowed with mere remnants of ruling powers, represented the former reigning family, "never for one moment flinched from the loyal course he laid down for himself from the first moment." [2] In Maisur, temporarily under British administration, a prominent Indian statesman on August 21, 1857, when triumphant

[1] Sir Mortimer Durand, *Life of Lyall*, p. 69.
[2] Kaye and Malleson, *History of the Mutiny*, vol. vi, p. 45.

proclamations were issuing from Delhi, thus addressed the British Resident: "What good will their success be? . . . Tyranny, despotism, plunder, ravage, cruelty, are only to be the rule. God forbid that any such results should ensue! We earnestly pray for the preservation of the British parental power in India, which has for nearly a century secured our persons and property, and has given us our liberty and our rights, and never interfered with our religions and customs." [1]

There can be no doubt that the attitude of the great majority of the rulers of about 680 native States with which the East India Company had established protective alliances was one of loyalty to the paramount power.

The frame-work of civil administration in British India outside the war-area stoutly withstood the strain of these critical months. The heroes of events within that area have their reward. Their names are held in perpetual remembrance. But there are also names, less known or unknown, to whom honour is also due, the names of Lord Elphinstone, Governor of Bombay, and Lord Harris, Governor of Madras, who denuded their Presidencies of troops to send succour elsewhere; the names of many civil officers in less prominent positions who kept order, collected revenue, suppressed minor disturbances amid constant scares, while over the border the guns were thundering. Some of these men in their day earned warm acknowledgments from Indians, as is instanced by the words used by the cotton-merchants of Bombay in presenting a valuable purse to Mr. Forjett, ex-superintendent of police, after his retirement from service, "in token of strong gratitude for one whose almost despotic powers and zealous energy had so quelled the explosive forces of native society that they seem to have become permanently subdued."

While it lasted the restored Moghal rule was largely financed by forced loans and contributions exacted from the moneyed classes in Delhi. The King and his advisers were powerless to control the army. In January 1858 Bahadur Shah was brought to trial, and after two months of investigation was exiled to Rangoon, where he died at the age of eighty-seven in 1862.

When the rebellion had been suppressed, the East India Company was finally abolished and the Crown took over the Government of India. For long the Company had been a commercial association as well as a governing agency. It had considered Indian affairs from a commercial rather than

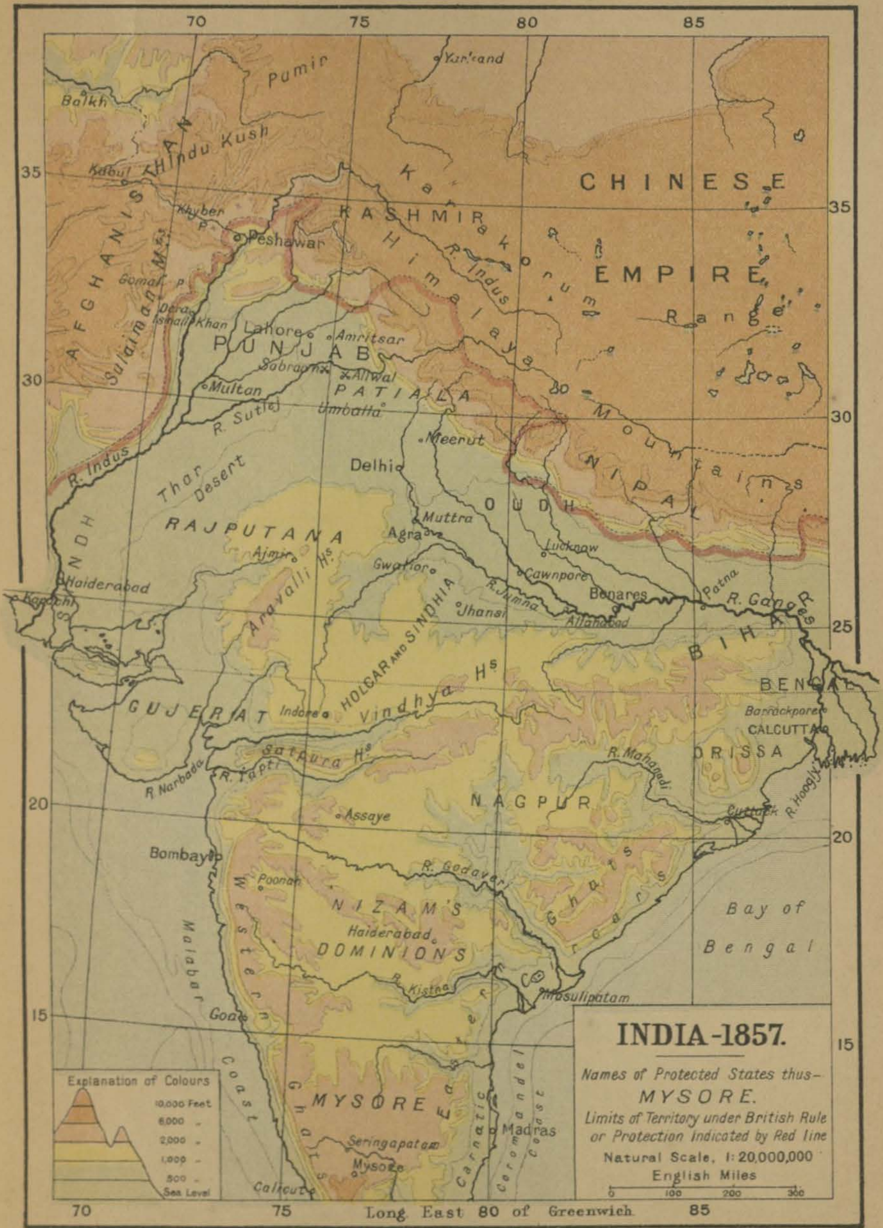
[1] Lee Warner's *Dalhousie*, vol. ii, p. 367.

a political standpoint. It had unwillingly accepted annexations as accomplished facts, necessitated apparently by circumstances, but regrettable and liable to lead to awkward complications. But from the year 1834 the Company had ceased entirely to trade; and proud of the educative mission entrusted to it by Parliament, believing in the beneficial effects of British rule, in 1841 the Directors laid down the principle that no "just or honourable accession of territory or revenue should be abandoned, although at the same time all existing claims of right must be scrupulously observed." This policy, interpreted by Dalhousie, united with other circumstances to cause the Mutiny, but contributed means towards its suppression. A scapegoat, however, was required by Parliament; and, in any case, the Company's work was done. It had accomplished an imposing and momentous transaction such as no other private corporation has ever at any time achieved. It transferred to the Crown a splendid trust.

Queen Victoria's proclamation of November 1, 1858, declared that the rights, dignity and honour of Indian ruling princes were to be preserved as Her Majesty's own, and that, so far as might be, all Her Majesty's subjects, of whatever race and creed, were to be freely and impartially admitted to offices in the public service, the duties of which they might be qualified by their education, ability and integrity to discharge. Peaceful industry was to be stimulated; works of public utility and improvement were to be promoted; and the government was to be administered for the benefit of all Her Majesty's subjects in India.

The memorable words "In their prosperity will be our strength, in their contentment our security, and in their gratitude our great reward," breathe the spirit of the great Queen herself, who requested her Prime Minister to remember in preparing the Proclamation that "it is a female sovereign who speaks to more than a hundred millions of Eastern people, on assuming the direct government over them, and after a bloody war, giving them pledges, which her future reign is to redeem, and explaining the privileges of her Government. Such a document should breathe feelings of generosity, benevolence and religious toleration, and point out the privileges which the Indians will receive in being placed on an equality with the subjects of the British Crown, and the prosperity following in the train of civilisation." The proclamation appointed the noble-minded Lord Canning to be the first Viceroy and Governor-General of India.

Three years afterwards, by the Indian Councils Act of 1861, an important step was taken in associating Indians with the Central and the Presidency Governments for legislative purposes, albeit to a very limited extent. The Governor-General's Executive Council would in future consist of five members, three of whom had been in the India service of the Crown for two years at least, and of the Commander-in-Chief as an extraordinary member. For purposes of legislation the Governor-General could nominate not less than six or more than twelve members to his Council, not less than half of whom must be non-officials. Non-officials too would assist the Madras and Bombay Executive Councils in legislation and, with the approval of the Home Government, power could be given to the Lieutenant-Governors of Bengal, the North-west Provinces and the Punjab, who ruled without Executive Councils, to convoke small Legislative Councils.


INDIA-1857.
Names of Protected States thus–
MYSORE.
Limits of Territory under British Rule or Protection indicated by Red line
Natural Scale, 1:20,000,000
English Miles
0 100 200 300
Explanation of Colours
10,000 Feet
6,000
2,000
1,000
500
Sea Level
Long. East 80 of Greenwich
CHINESE EMPIRE
AFGHANISTAN
KASHMIR
PUNJAB
PATIALA
RAJPUTANA
SINDH
GUJERAT
OUDH
NIPAL
BIHAR
BENGAL
ORISSA
NAGPUR
HOLCAR AND SINDHIA
NIZAM'S DOMINIONS
MYSORE
Bay of Bengal
Peshawar
Lahore
Amritsar
Multan
Umballa
Meerut
Delhi
Agra
Muttra
Lucknow
Cawnpore
Benares
Allahabad
Patna
Gwalior
Jhansi
Ajmir
Haiderabad
Karachi
Indore
Assaye
Bombay
Poonah
Goa
Calicut
Mysore
Seringapatam
Madras
Masulipatam
Cuttack
Barrackpore
CALCUTTA
Yarkand
Balkh
Kabul
Khyber P.
Gomal P.
Dera Ismail Khan
Sobraon
Aliwal
Hindu Kush
Pamir
Sulaiman Mts.
Karakorum Range
Himalaya Mountains
Thar Desert
Aravalli Hs.
Vindhya Hs.
Satpura Hs.
Western Ghats
Eastern Ghats
Malabar Coast
Coromandel Coast
Carnatic
Circars
R. Indus
R. Sutlej
R. Jumna
R. Ganges
R. Narbada
R. Tapti
R. Godavari
R. Kistna
R. Mahanadi
R. Hoogly
W. & A. K. Johnston, Limited, Edinburgh & London

PART III—FROM 1861 TO 1914

XVI

RECONSTRUCTION

If Dalhousie accelerated the great clash of ideas which contributed largely to produce the Mutiny, he also prepared the way for the period of reconstruction which followed. He founded the Department of Public Works. "He opened the Ganges Canal. He gave the great impulse from the India side to the overland route, and to steam communication via the Red Sea with England. He cut the first sod of an Indian railway. Under his orders the first line of electric telegraph posts across India was set up. His engineers metalled a longer mileage of roads than had been constructed by the four preceding Governor-Generals. His Revenue officers settled the assessment of the soil and recorded the land-rights of the people throughout a larger area. He introduced cheap postage into India. On the system of Public Instruction inaugurated during his rule the education of India still rests."[1] This system was established gradually during the viceroyalty of Lord Canning, who, in spite of stress and storm, adhered steadily to his predecessor's progressive policy. Within the years which immediately followed the Mutiny the India of modern times took shape. In its development British capital played a large part, financing the railways and shipping, the main solvents of the barriers of ages.

But before we survey the chief events of twenty years, we must examine briefly the system of administration which prevailed throughout that period.

The Secretary of State possessed far more power than had ever fallen to the lot of the President of the defunct Board of Control. Through the medium of the electric telegraph he could exercise wide and constant supervision over the affairs of India. He had no Court of Directors to consult or humour.

[1] Hunter, *India under the Queen.*

He was the agent of Parliament, who through him, and no longer through the periodical inquests which were held before renewals of the Company's charter, controlled administration in India. He was assisted by a Council of experts which lacked the representative character of the Court of Directors and could be overruled with impunity.

Government in India itself was centred in the hands of the Viceroy. His Executive Council, which, as explained, was expanded for legislative purposes, was ordinarily a Cabinet which on emergency might be overruled by its chief. While each of its members was in charge of a separate department, he was assisted by a Secretary who once a week personally laid papers relating to important cases in that department before the Viceroy and received instructions thereon. Differences of opinion between the Viceroy and a Member were referred to the full Council. At all times the personality and capacity of the Viceroy constituted a factor of very great importance.

Two provinces, Madras and Bombay, retaining the old title of Presidency, remained under Governors assisted by small official Executive Councils. Three provinces, the Punjab, the North-west and Bengal, were under Lieutenant-Governors. Four provinces, Oudh, the Central Provinces, Burma, Assam, were under Chief Commissioners. Later on the Lieutenant-Governor of the North-west Provinces became *ex-officio* Chief Commissioner of Oudh.

The major provinces are in fact different countries where largely different languages are spoken. Each province was then, and is now, divided into districts which in all provinces but Madras are combined, in groups from four to six, into divisions under Commissioners. The average size of a district is 4,430 square miles, but many are much larger. Each district was in those days in charge of an officer of the Indian Civil Service, who was assisted by a staff of Indian deputy magistrates and generally by a joint magistrate drawn from his own Service. The district officer communicated with the provincial Government through his adviser and superintendent, the Commissioner. His usual title, "Collector and Magistrate," expressed his dual capacity. He directed the revenue and tax-collecting staff; he also exercised supervision over the conduct of magisterial business and was responsible for order and good government. He was supported by a small force of Indian police under a British superintendent. Other of his duties were to foster education, to combat epidemics with the assistance of

a British civil surgeon and that officer's subordinate staff and to do all that he could for the welfare of his people.

Judicial work in each district was in the charge of a judge, also an officer of the Civil Service, who tried the more serious cases, heard appeals from subordinate magistrates and civil judges and belonged to a judicial hierarchy presided over by a High Court in the older provinces and by a Judicial Commissioner in the younger. In 1862 Penal and Criminal Procedure Codes for all British India came into force, and the Muhammadan element finally disappeared from the Criminal Law. A Civil Procedure Code followed. An Act of 1861 had substituted High Courts for the old (King's) Supreme[1] and (Company's) Chief Courts, which were thus amalgamated. The High Courts were presided over by barrister Chief Justices, and were composed of judges, who were partly barristers and partly civil servants.

District administration was thus entirely guided by the Civil Service, the older members of which had been trained at the extinct East India Company's College of Haileybury, while the younger had obtained their appointments after success in open competitive examinations held in London. Indian candidates were then few and rarely successful. In the newly annexed provinces, the Punjab, Oudh, Burma, the Central Provinces, the administrative staff was partly composed of military officers.

In pre-Mutiny British India, when there were no railways or telegraphs, when roads were few and bad, when during the rainy season large areas of country were covered with unbroken sheets of water, Local Governments and district officers were of necessity accorded a large measure of initiative and independence. But within the period now under review, as means of communication multiplied and extended, authority gradually centralised. Writing and reporting increased; independence diminished; less time remained for that friendly intercourse with and close study of the people which had been the tradition of British administration. As a rule, however, supervision was considerate; and the work of district officers, if more laborious, was still most interesting. In very few districts was there a military garrison. The support of units isolated among thronging congeries of races and sects was popular respect for the power and kindly purposes of the British Raj.

[1] Supreme Courts had been established at Madras in 1800, and at Bombay in 1823.

One-third of India was covered by those States which had been, in the words of Lord Canning, " breakwaters in the storm which would otherwise have swept over us in one great wave." In their case the doctrine of lapse was completely abolished. Lord Canning issued adoption *sanads*, or grants, addressed to the more important chiefs, assuring Hindus that in future adoptions would be recognised and confirmed, and Muslims that, on failure of natural heirs, any succession to the government of their States which might be permitted by Muhammadan law would be upheld. The effect of these sanads extended far beyond the recipients, for the principle now recognised thereby was of general application. Only disloyalty and breach of previous treaties or recorded obligations could disturb the new engagements. The Government of India, however, reserved a right of interposition and assumption of temporary charge of a State should serious abuses threaten anarchy therein and necessitate such a step. Rulers of States were expected to co-operate with the suzerain power in postal arrangements and in matters relating to railway and telegraph lines.

Before Lord Canning's departure, and in pursuance of the scheme of State-education laid down in 1854, examining Universities were established at Calcutta, Bombay and Madras on the model of the University of London. The territories of British Burma, Tenasserim and Pegu were consolidated into one charge and placed under a Chief Commissioner. The strength of the British Army in India was fixed at 76,000, and that of the Indian Army at 120,000. Lord Canning had achieved much when, utterly worn out, he returned to England to die there three months later. But he will always be most gratefully remembered for his patience and courage in the darkest hours of 1857, and for the noble and merciful spirit which he consistently showed throughout the suppression of the rebellion. He was succeeded by Lord Elgin, who died shortly afterwards; and Lord Elgin was followed by Sir John Lawrence of Punjab fame.

Shortly after arrival Lawrence was confronted by the Orissa famine, resulting from the failure of the rains of 1865 and the consequent destruction of the rice-crops in a province where, from lack of adequate communications, the people were largely shut up between pathless jungles and impracticable sea. The Bengal Government failed to realise that in such circumstances private enterprise could not effect much. At first remedial measures were inadequate and then expenditure was wasteful.

The whole famine administration was discreditable to the provincial and central governments.

It impressed on the Viceroy the meaning of good communications; and he zealously pushed on railways, canals and public works. British capital poured into the country; commerce developed; schools and colleges grew and multiplied; peace reigned in British territory and Native States. In the former much attention was paid to the registration of the rights and tenures of the agricultural classes, to the adjustment of the relations between landlords and tenants. It was thoroughly realised that the rural population constitutes 90 per cent. of the people of India, paying by far the greater portion of the revenue and manning the army. Canning had already legislated for landlords and tenants in Bengal. Lawrence had, throughout his whole career, been the champion of the peasants. Tenant-right in Oudh and the Punjab received his earnest attention now and became the subject of legislation. Extension of Cornwallis's permanent settlement to provinces other than Bengal was debated and eventually negatived. Temporary settlements, whereby assessments of land revenue were revised at fixed periods, were considered better for all concerned.

Affairs in Afghanistan again claimed attention. A troublesome frontier campaign against the Wahabi Muslim fanatics had just been brought to a close when Lawrence assumed office. Later on he was compelled to despatch a large force to deal with the tribes of the Black Mountain. But behind the wild races of the frontier were the Afghans. Dost Muhammad had died in 1863, after adding Herat to his kingdom. A prolonged struggle followed between his son Shere Ali, two other sons, and a grandson afterwards famous as Amir Abdul Rahman. In 1868 Shere Ali established his supremacy. Abdul Rahman sought refuge in Russian territory. Shere Ali was anxious to strengthen his position by a British alliance; but Lawrence was averse from any such entanglement and recommended to London a policy of goodwill towards the *de facto* ruler of Afghanistan, whoever that might be, coupled with negotiations with Russia for the demarcation of British and Russian spheres of influence. Shere Ali's anxiety for a British alliance was partly dictated by fear and distrust of Russia. In 1865 that Power had annexed Tashkent; in 1867 she had appointed a Governor-General of Turkistan; in 1868 she had captured Samarqand. Her further advance seemed certain. In 1869, before a policy toward Afghanistan had been determined, Lawrence left India, after years of noble service, and

was succeeded by the Earl of Mayo. Lawrence was raised to the peerage on his return to England.

Lord Mayo had been Chief Secretary for Ireland before he was selected by Disraeli to be Viceroy of India. He was a man of fine presence, much ability, unbounded energy and lofty character. He lost no time in continuing negotiations with Shere Ali, whom he met at Ambala. He was instructed by the Liberal Government, which had by that time come into power in England, to accord moral support only to the Amir, but to say that gifts of money, arms and ammunition might follow whenever the British Government thought fit. That Government would " view with severe displeasure " any attempt to oust him from his throne. Shere Ali was captivated by the Viceroy's genial personality and was satisfied for the time. Negotiations with Russia were started in London; and an understanding was reached as to the integrity of Afghanistan. General progress was rapid under Lord Mayo, who effected considerable financial reform, organised a statistical survey, instituted a Department of Agriculture and Commerce and caused the first census of India to be undertaken. But, in the prime of a beneficent career, he was assassinated by a Pathan convict at Port Blair in the Andaman Islands penal settlement.

He was succeeded by Lord Northbrook, an able financier, who took advantage of a period of highly prosperous trade which followed on the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 to ease taxation. He held that, in the words of the late Lord Cromer, " the one thing that the Oriental does appreciate is low taxation." [1] He lowered the rate of import duties from 7½ to 5 per cent.; but although zealously pressed by the Liberal Government in power to go further in the direction of free trade, he refused to comply. He abolished all export duties except those on rice, oil, indigo and lac. A large annual surplus of foodstuffs was now raised for exportation, as also were other and more profitable crops than foodstuffs. Even in 1830 the exports of India had been valued at no more than £11,000,000. Fifty years later cultivation had been largely extended, and Indian produce alone, reared by Indian husbandmen and sold to foreign nations, was valued at £66,000,000 sterling.

In June 1873 Khiva fell to the Russians, and in the following month an envoy from Shere Ali arrived at Simla who pleaded for a defensive alliance. Northbrook favoured promising help in the event of unprovoked attack on Afghanistan,

[1] Strachey, *Adventure of Living*, p. 378.

but was unable to procure sanction from Gladstone's Government to this course. In 1874, however, a general election placed a Conservative Government in power. Disraeli became Premier and Lord Salisbury became Secretary of State for India. The Viceroy was urged to persuade the Amir to receive a British agent at Kabul, instructions against which Lord Northbrook and his whole Council strongly protested. Lord Salisbury persisted. Lord Northbrook was convinced that Shere Ali would strongly object to such a proposal and that the real solution was to establish " a frank and clear understanding with Russia as to the relative position of British and Russian interests in Asia." He was out of sympathy with Disraeli and Lord Salisbury, and had previously resented pressure to abolish all cotton duties, holding that the revenue therefrom could not be surrendered and that the home Government were attempting "to weaken the authority" of his Government. He resigned, and was succeeded by the Earl of Lytton.

Lord Lytton came out, empowered to offer Shere Ali the alliance for which he had previously petitioned in vain, on condition that a British Resident should be stationed at Herat. His first step was to ask the Amir to receive a complimentary mission which would inform him of the assumption by Queen Victoria of the title of Empress of India. Shere Ali refused on the ostensible ground that such a mission was unnecessary, but, according to the British Muslim agent at Kabul, really because he feared for the safety of the mission and wished to avoid being also pressed to receive a Russian mission.

The course of subsequent negotiations was disastrous. Lord Lytton, aware of correspondence between Shere Ali and the Governor-General of Turkestan, made little allowance for the former's genuine suspicions and real difficulties. The Amir was alarmed by various circumstances, including an agreement of 1876 between the British and the Khan of Khelat in Baluchistan, which allowed the former to occupy Quetta. He was persuaded by a Russian envoy, who arrived in Kabul uninvited, to conclude a treaty of alliance with Russia. The Russian left soon afterwards. But a British mission had been despatched and was politely turned back from Ali Musjid at the mouth of the Khaibar Pass. The Viceroy, declaring that it had been " forcibly repulsed," was allowed to send an ultimatum threatening invasion unless within a fixed time a suitable apology were offered and consent were given to the reception of a permanent British mission in Afghanistan.

The time-limit expired. A belated reply accepted the mission but offered no apology; and on the day after the expiry of the ultimatum the Viceroy set his army in motion. His policy had been headstrong. The action of Russia had been impelled by Britain's attitude in the Russo-Turkish War. But now the Berlin Conference was over, and the London Cabinet had remonstrated with Russia regarding Afghanistan, cautioning Lord Lytton not to hurry in sending the mission and not to despatch it by the Khaibar. He was to wait until the home Government had heard from Russia. He paid small attention to these directions, and thus provoked the "coup" which precipitated war.

Little resistance was made by the Afghan troops. The Amir himself, failing to obtain any assistance from Russia, fled into exile and died in February 1879 worn out by disease and trouble. In May 1879 the new Amir, his son Yakub Khan, by the Treaty of Gandamak, accepted the British demands. But, in the following September, the British envoy at Kabul, Sir Louis Cavagnari, was murdered with all his escort; and then the real war began. It was marked by desperate fighting with the Afghan tribal levies, by the fine generalship of Sir Donald Stewart and Sir Frederick, afterwards Lord, Roberts, by the victory of Ayub Khan, a son of Shere Ali, over General Burrows at Maiwand, by Roberts's famous march from Kabul to Kandahar and subsequent victory over Ayub Khan. Yakub Khan had abdicated; and the war ended, after Lord Lytton's departure, in the establishment of Abdul Rahman, nephew of Shere Ali and grandson of Dost Muhammad, as Amir of Afghanistan. He was to have no foreign relations with any Power except the British, but was not to be required to receive a British agent at Kabul. The British Government would assist him to repel the unprovoked aggression of any foreign Power.

It is obvious that arrangements of this kind could long before have been made with the unfortunate Shere Ali, who was naturally soured and bewildered by the vagaries of English party government. It also seems probable that, even when he had allied himself with Russia, patience, pressure on Russia and determination on the part of the Viceroy to avoid war if possible, would have dissolved the alliance without an appeal to arms.[1] After the general election of 1880 the Liberals returned to office; and Lord Lytton was succeeded by the Marquis of Ripon.

[1] See Buckle, *Life of Disraeli*, vol. vi, ch. x.

Early in the Viceroyalty of Lord Lytton the Government was faced with a severe famine which extended over most of Southern India, and in conjunction with previous famines led to the decision that such calamities could no longer be dealt with empirically, as they occurred on failure of particular monsoons. Preventive and anticipatory measures were now devised, which included arrangements for the preparation of programmes of relief works and for the giving of doles to impotent paupers. A surplus too of £1,300,000 over the ordinary revenue, which was to be used partly for provision of reserve resources and partly for the construction of railways and canals through precarious districts, was budgeted for. The money was to be raised by new cesses on land and other taxation. From these arrangements was elaborated the present organised system of famine relief. Lord Lytton's Government also carried through important fiscal reforms, and, in deference to a resolution of the House of Commons, removed import duties from the coarser kinds of cotton cloth. In order to effect the removal, the Viceroy overrode the majority of his Executive Council, who regarded the measure as proposed in order to retain the political support of the Lancashire cotton manufacturers.

Lytton's Government founded a "Statutory Civil Service," which was intended to afford a new door for Indians who wished to enter the higher ranks of the public service. Indians could indeed compete in London; but few did so, and fewer were successful. The Statutory Civil Service proved a failure. It did not attract suitable candidates and was abolished after eight years of trial.

The constant endeavours of some vernacular newspapers, especially in Calcutta, to excite racial hatred against the Government led to the passing of an Act in 1878 for the better control of the vernacular press. The Act was denounced by Mr. Gladstone, then in opposition, and was repealed in 1882 by Lord Ripon's Government. The press proceeded on its way unchecked by any special law.

On January 1, 1877, Her Majesty Queen Victoria, in recognition of the transfer of government made in 1858, was at Delhi proclaimed Empress of India. As in 1858, so also in 1877, there was an earnest and sympathetic note in Her Majesty's message which evoked warm response. India had already been brought into touch with the Royal Family of England through the visit of King Edward VII, then Prince of Wales, during the viceroyalty of Lord Northbrook. Her Majesty had noted

"with heartfelt satisfaction" the reception accorded to her son, and earnestly trusted "that from the highest to the humblest all her Indian subjects might feel that under her rule the great principles of liberty, equity and justice were secured to them; and that to promote their happiness, to add to their prosperity and advance their welfare were the ever-present aims and objects of her Empire."

XVII

THE BEGINNING OF POLITICS

In 1880 the policy of Government in India was based upon three principles—precaution against foreign invasion, maintenance of internal peace, promotion of general progress. The pursuit of these objectives in a sub-continent equal in size to Europe excluding Russia, multitudinous in its traditions, languages and races, had for years engrossed and was engrossing the strenuous energies of a company of British administrators and soldiers, small indeed in proportion to the hundreds of millions concerned. It has often been laid to the charge of these men that they sought efficiency too zealously. Their goal was simply that order and harmonious progress which alone can ever produce a better life for all classes in India.

But among the lawyers, the journalists, the professors, the schoolmasters, among the literary and clerical classes, Western education was spreading and new political ideas were germinating. "The spread of education," wrote the new Viceroy to the Secretary of State (who like himself was a Gladstonian Liberal), "the existing and increasing influence of a free press, the substitution of legal for discretionary administration, the progress of railways, telegraphs, etc., the easier communication with Europe, and the more ready influx of European ideas, are beginning to produce a marked effect on the people; new ideas are springing up; new aspirations are being called forth; the power of public opinion is growing and strengthening day by day; and a movement has begun which will advance with greater rapidity and force every year." Lord Ripon considered that this movement should be met *not* by "a representation of the people of a European democratic type," but by measures which would gradually train "the best, most intelligent and most influential men in the community to take an interest and

active part in the management of their local affairs."[1] He took action in this direction.

Local funds committees, containing a small elected element, had existed in districts for many years; but their sphere of work was very limited. They had practically served as advisers to district officers, in certain minor matters. When, however, in 1881, under a scheme of financial decentralisation initiated by Lord Mayo, the contracts between the provincial and central Governments for the allotment of revenue and expenditure came up for revision, the Governor-General-in-Council announced that the question of local self-government must be seriously taken up. Provincial Governments must consider the devolution of certain departments of administration from provincial to local control, as well as from Imperial to provincial. The extension of the elective element on local bodies must also be arranged for.

In the following year the central Government laid down the lines on which local self-governing bodies in the shape of district and municipal Boards, composed mainly of elected members, would forthwith be established. Functions and funds would be assigned to these bodies in connection with the care of primary schools, dispensaries, vaccination, the public health, the upkeep of roads and similar matters. Lord Ripon desired that they should be watched, and when necessary, checked, *from without*, by district officers. But here he met with considerable resistance from official opinion, both in the Council of the Secretary of State and in India, the opposition holding that the district officers should guide the new bodies from within. Eventually Acts were passed for the various provinces which permitted the Boards, constituted on the lines indicated, to elect their own chairman only where the Government did not consider that circumstances required the appointment of a nominated chairman, generally the district officer.

The discussion which preceded this legislation was synchronous with the Ilbert Bill controversy, so named after Mr. (now Sir) Courtenay Ilbert, then Legal Member of the Viceroy's Council. The question here at issue was raised by a note forwarded to the Government of Bengal by a Hindu civil officer, who represented the anomalous position in which Indian members of the Civil Service were placed by existing laws, which limited the jurisdiction to be exercised over European British subjects outside Calcutta to judicial officers who were themselves European British subjects. This note led to

[1] Wolf, *Life of Ripon*, vol. ii, ch. xix.

the publication of proposals by the Government of India, the effect of which would have been to remove from the Criminal Procedure Code all judicial qualifications based merely on race distinctions. The proposals were considered to imperil the liberties of British non-officials and met with fierce European opposition. After being under consideration for over a year and exciting keen racial animosity, they were largely withdrawn.

Lord Ripon consoled himself for this disastrous fiasco with the reflection that his local self-government arrangements were the measures that really mattered, as they were designed to anticipate "the great coming difficulty of the future," which clearly would be adequate satisfaction of natural and growing aspirations. It was also desirable to supplement these initial efforts by improving and extending education, for it was "politically dangerous to develop a small class of highly educated natives addressing themselves to ignorant and uncultivated masses." [1] The Government therefore appointed an Educational Commission which was instructed to examine various problems, among others how best to stimulate private effort and to substitute private schools aided from State funds for State schools. It was desirable that the well-to-do should put their hands into their pockets and pay a fair price for the education of their sons. More money would then be available for the spreading of primary education among the many millions who were living with their minds entirely uncultivated. The Government also wished to entrust educational responsibilities increasingly to local bodies. The Commission reported, after prolonged enquiries, in favour of a devolution of control which was carried far in Bengal, with the result that the quality of the secondary education imparted gradually deteriorated.

Lord Ripon was succeeded by Lord Dufferin in November 1884. The attention of the new Viceroy, who was an accomplished statesman and diplomatist, was immediately engaged by negotiations with Russia regarding the Russo-Afghan frontier. These, after one critical phase, terminated happily, owing largely to the robust common sense of Amir Abdul Rahman, who had no desire to see Afghanistan a battleground between two great Empires. At a crisis in the negotiations various ruling princes tendered their services to defend the Empire; and from such offers sprang eventually the Imperial Service troops, military contingents recruited in the Native States, inspected by British officers, available for service under

[1] Wolf, *Life of Ripon*, vol. ii, p. 114.

the supreme Government when placed at its disposal by the chiefs concerned.

On January 1, 1886, Upper Burma, a large but scantily-peopled area, was annexed, after a brief war, caused by much Burmese provocation and Burmese negotiations with France. The pacification and settlement of the country, which has since made rapid progress, were effected satisfactorily after two years of harassing guerrilla warfare.

Pregnant events of Lord Dufferin's viceroyalty were the earliest annual meetings of the Indian National Congress. The first of these took place at Bombay on December 28, 29 and 30, 1885. They were attended by seventy-two delegates, mostly lawyers, schoolmasters or journalists, collected, sometimes after considerable effort, from cities or large towns in various provinces. The only Muhammadans present were two Bombay attorneys. The prospectus of the new movement, which was largely inspired by Mr. Allan Octavian Hume, an ex-civil servant, had expressed the hope that the conferences would form "the germ of a native Parliament." The President of the meetings, Mr. W. Bonerjee, Standing Counsel to Government in Calcutta, proclaimed that one of the objects of the association was "the fuller development and consolidation of those sentiments of national unity that had their origin in Lord Ripon's memorable reign." They were thoroughly loyal to Britain, which had given them order, railways, "above all the inestimable benefit of Western education," but they desired that the people should take their "natural and legitimate" share in the government.

Various resolutions were passed, one demanding expansion of the Legislative Councils and admission of members elected by such organised bodies as municipal and district boards. Thus enlarged, the Councils should be able to interpellate the Executive on all administrative matters. Another resolution advised the establishment of a standing committee of the House of Commons which would receive and consider formal protests lodged by majorities of the new Legislative Councils against the exercise by the Executive Government of the power which would be vested in it of overruling the decisions of such majorities. A third resolution recommended simultaneous examinations in India and England for admission to the higher or covenanted Civil Service.

The next Congress met a year later at Calcutta and was attended by 440 delegates, of whom 230 came from Bengal. Only thirty-three were Muhammadans. So far the movement

was essentially Hindu and was confined to the Western-educated classes. The aristocracy, the territorial and martial classes, the masses, stood apart from it.

The shop-keeping classes, it was complained by a Congress writer, cared for no change in a form of Government which both prevented others from robbing them and afforded them ample opportunities for enriching themselves. Muhammadan abstention was due to the attitude of certain Muhammadan leaders, notably Saiyid Ahmad, a man of high calibre and great personal force, who strongly declared for a policy of trust in the British Government and was unable to see how any electoral system could fail to place Muhammadans in a hopeless minority.

Some advocates of the new movement were anxious to promote simultaneously social innovations among Hindus. "You cannot," argued the most strenuous of these, Mr. Justice Ranade, "have a good social system when you find yourself low in the scale of political rights, nor can you be fit to exercise political rights and privileges unless your social system is based on reason and justice." The main objectives of the social reformers were removal of the despotism of caste, which condemns many millions of Hindus to be regarded as untouchable, and in some places unapproachable, by their higher-born co-religionists; mitigation at least of the seclusion of women, and promotion of female education; abandonment of the enforced lifelong celibacy of Hindu widows, however young; stoppage of premature and necessarily injurious marriage.

The strength of social conservatism is evident from the fact that in 1891 an inadequate remedial measure in the shape of an Act raising the age of consent from ten to twelve was made law in the teeth of very strong Hindu opposition.

National social conferences were started in 1887, but soon languished, as Congress leaders dared not antagonise Conservative sentiment. They revived, however, later on under religious and political stimulus. But the obstacles to social reform are of the most solid kind. It has lately lost a fearless friend in H.H. the late Maharaja of Kolhapur.

In December 1888 Lord Dufferin was relieved by Lord Lansdowne, who had previously been Governor-General of Canada. Before departing he had framed proposals for liberalising the Legislative Councils, and had appointed a Commission to investigate the possibilities of opening the public services more widely to Indians. The recommendations of this Com-

mission were generally adopted, but were pronounced unsatisfying by the Congress leaders, whose December oratorical festivals were rapidly gaining in popularity among the Western-educated classes.

Lord Dufferin's proposals for reforming the Legislative Councils were based on the principle that while it was desirable that the central and provincial Governments should take counsel with prominent Indians, the final decision in all important questions, the paramount control of policy, must rest with the Government. No administration could remain at the head of affairs among the various Indian nationalities which did not possess sufficient power to carry out whatever measures or policy it might consider to be for the public interest. The Viceroy drew a vivid picture of the India of his day which explains the cautious nature of his proposals :

" This population is composed of a large number of distinct nationalities, professing various religions, practising diverse rites, speaking different languages, while many of them are still further separated from one another by discordant prejudices, by conflicting source of usages and even antagonistic material interests. But perhaps the most patent characteristic of our Indian cosmos is its division into two mighty political communities as distant from each other as the poles asunder in their religious faith, their historical antecedents, their social organisation and their natural aptitudes.

" On the one hand, the Hindus, numbering 190,000,000, with their polytheistic beliefs, their temples adorned with images and idols, their veneration for the sacred law, their elaborate class distinctions, and their habits of submission to successive conquerors ; on the other hand, the Muhammadans, a nation of 50,000,000, with their monotheism, their iconoclastic fanaticism, their animal sacrifices, their social equality and their remembrance of the days when, enthroned at Delhi, they reigned supreme from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin. . . . To these must be added a host of minor nationalities—most of them numbering millions—almost as widely differentiated from one another by ethnological or political distinctions as are the Hindus from the Muhammadans, such as the Sikhs, with their warlike habits and traditions and their enthusiastic religious beliefs—the Rohillas, the Pathans, the Assamese—the Baluchees, and other wild and martial tribes on our frontiers—the hillmen dwelling in the folds of the Himalayas—our subjects in Burma, Mongol in race and Buddhist in religion—non-Aryan peoples in the centre and south of India—and the enterprising Parsees,

with their rapidly developing manufactures and commercial interests.

"Again, amongst these numerous communities may be found, at one and the same moment, all the various stages of civilisation through which mankind has passed from the prehistoric ages to the present day. At one end of the scale we have the naked savage hillman; and at the other, the Europeanised native gentleman, with his English costume, his advanced democratic ideas, his Western philosophy and his literary culture; while between the two lies layer upon layer or in close juxtaposition, wandering communities; collections of undisciplined warriors, with their blood feuds, their clan organisation and loose tribal government; feudal chiefs and barons, with their retainers, their seignorial jurisdiction and their mediæval notions; and modernised country gentlemen and enterprising merchants and manufacturers, with their well-managed estates and prosperous enterprises." [1]

After much discussion, Lord Dufferin's proposals bore fruit in the Councils Act of 1892, which enlarged the Legislative Councils to a very moderate extent and established the fact of election thereto by public bodies, including the new Municipal and District Boards. The Government would nominate a majority to each Council. Questions might be asked by members under certain restrictions, and the annual Budget might be discussed but not voted on.

The Congress were dissatisfied with these reforms and developed a practice of sending delegates to England to create there an atmosphere favourable to their ambitions. Simultaneously they pushed their propaganda in India, increasingly endeavouring to discredit the existing system of Government. Among them were some Konkanasth Brahmans whose quarrel with British rule and Western civilisation lay deep down, who resented either in any shape whatever, who regarded them as inimical to their own religious and social ascendancy and quoted with bitterness the far-away past of Hinduism or the later glories of the Peishwas. In the Bombay Presidency a movement was inaugurated for the repair of Sivaji's tomb. Festivals were held in his honour, and the memory of his exploits was revived in verses. This movement was anti-Muslim at first, as well as anti-British. It was Brahman and anti-foreign.

Lord Lansdowne's Government adopted a neutral attitude toward the Congress movement, which, it considered, repre-

[1] Montagu-Chelmsford Report, p. 117.

sented "what would be called in Europe the advanced Liberal Party as distinguished from the great mass of Conservative opinion which exists beside it." [1]

Lord Lansdowne's peaceful viceroyalty was marked by the despatch of Sir Mortimer Durand, Foreign Secretary, to Kabul in order to settle certain controversies with Amir Abdul Rahman. The mission was eminently successful. It was arranged that a boundary line marking spheres of influence on the north-west frontier should be demarcated by Afghan and British commissioners.

In 1893 Lord Lansdowne was succeeded by Lord Elgin, the son of a previous Viceroy. In 1895 the rains were deficient and in 1896 they largely failed. A famine resulted, most serious in the United and Central Provinces, but affecting other areas as well. It was stoutly and efficiently combated by the Administration at a cost of over £5,000,000 sterling. Four million persons were receiving relief in the early months of 1897.

In 1896 India was assailed by another malignant enemy. Bubonic plague arrived at Bombay and spread to Poona, the centre of the anti-foreign movement. It soon caused wide-spread mortality and, according to custom at such times, the masses were disposed to blame their rulers. In its anxiety to arrest the progress of the pestilence the Bombay Government adopted methods of segregation which interfered with the habits and ideas of the people. House-to-house visitations were resorted to; and in Poona British soldiers were employed on search-parties.

Natural dislike of such measures was fanned by bitter diatribes in the vernacular press, and especially in a newspaper named the *Kesari* (the *Lion*), edited by a Konkanasth Brahman named Bal Gangadhar Tilak, a well-known Congress man, who had bitterly opposed the Government's endeavour to mitigate the evil of child-marriage. Articles in the *Kesari* published in May and June 1897 ascribed oppressive intentions to the Government, stigmatised Mr. Rand, the Plague Commissioner, as a tyrant, and in verse depicted Sivaji awakened from his long sleep and horrified at the state of his realm. He had established *swaraj*. But now famine and plague stalked through the land; Brahmans were imprisoned, and white men escaped justice. One article hinted that in certain circumstances political murder was justifiable.

Shortly after its appearance Mr. Rand and another British officer were assassinated in Poona by two young Brahmans.

[1] Lovett, *Indian Nationalist Movement*, p. 45.

The murderers were arrested, tried, convicted and executed. Tilak was prosecuted and was convicted of spreading disaffection. He was sentenced to a term of imprisonment, but his influence increased and spread especially in the western presidency. Elsewhere in India Hindu revivalists were beginning to blend anti-foreign with religious teaching. The tone of the Hindu press became bitterer. Much stress was laid on the fact that in 1894 the Government had been compelled by the Secretary of State to reduce the duty on Lancashire woven-cotton imports from 5 to 3½ per cent. and to impose a countervailing excise duty on woven-cotton fabrics manufactured in Indian mills.

The close of Lord Elgin's time was marked by a war with the Swatis, the Mohmands and Afridis, tribes on the north-west frontier, which was not brought to a satisfactory conclusion until large forces had been employed and Tirah, the country of the Afridis, had been penetrated by British troops. A road had been made to Chitral, which had previously been annexed after a revolution and defiance of the British agent. British officers too had been demarcating the Durand boundary line. Tribal suspicion of British intentions was exploited by Muslim fanaticism, which resented English abuse of Turkish treatment of the Armenians.

In 1899 Lord Elgin was succeeded by the Hon. George Nathaniel Curzon, eldest son of Lord Scarsdale, who was raised to the Irish peerage as Lord Curzon of Kedleston. He was in his fortieth year and had served in Lord Salisbury's Government as Under-Secretary first for India and then for Foreign Affairs. After a distinguished career at Oxford, he had travelled in India, Afghanistan, Persia and other Asiatic countries. He had acquired a reputation for remarkable ability, energy and enthusiasm. To him the British Empire in India was still in its youth, and had in it "the vitality of an unexhausted purpose." He devoted himself to his task with "an imagination fired by the grandeur of the political problem which India presents." [1] The first period of his administration, from January 1899 to April 1904, covered the ordinary span of a viceroyalty and was eminently successful. The second, from December 1904 to November 1905, ended in his premature resignation and was marked by events which profoundly influenced the subsequent course of Indian affairs.

[1] Lord Morley's *Indian Speeches*, p. 121.

XVIII

THE ADMINISTRATION OF LORD CURZON

Lord Curzon began by adopting a definite north-west frontier policy. The Tirah campaign had left about 10,000 troops quartered beyond the British-Indian boundary line. He withdrew them from the Khaibar Pass, the Kurram Valley, and the tribal country generally, retaining and fortifying certain isolated posts. For the troops withdrawn he substituted tribal levies trained and commanded by British officers. British-Indian troops were concentrated at important points within British territory; strategic railways were laid. The frontier trans-Indus districts were withdrawn from Punjab administration and combined with the political charges of the Malakand, the Khaibar, the Kurram, Tochi and Wana in a new North-west Frontier Province with an area of 40,000 square miles under a Chief Commissioner responsible to the Government of India. At the same time, to avoid confusion, the North-west Provinces and Oudh were renamed the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh.

The Frontier settled down; and Amir Abdul Rahman allayed tribal fanaticism by proclaiming that no occasion for Jehad (holy war) existed. Should one arise, he would announce it. This strong and capable ruler died in 1901, after declaring in a published autobiography that he should have been allowed to annex tribal territory and ally himself with Turkey and Persia, both Muslim Powers. He was peacefully succeeded by his elder son Habibulla, with whom, after some delay and a mission to Kabul, harmonious relations were established. The new Amir received the title of "His Majesty" and continued to draw a large subsidy on the old terms.

Within the first year of assuming office, Lord Curzon despatched to Durban a fine and well-equipped British force which held Ladysmith and saved Natal from Boer invasion. At a later date, moved by spontaneous offers of help from Indian Princes, he offered 10,000 cavalry and infantry of the Indian Army for service in South Africa; but the offer was not accepted.

Britain had cleared the Persian Gulf of piratical craft and had kept its waters open to vessels of all nations. She did not desire to occupy land along the sea-board, but strongly objected to alienation of such land to another European Power.

Various menaces in this direction, and notably Germany's endeavour to procure a site for the terminus of the Berlin-to-Baghdad Railway, combined with increasing control of Northern Persia by Russia to produce decisive steps on the part of those responsible for British interests. In May 1903 Lord Lansdowne, Foreign Secretary, announced that Britain would resist, with all the means at her disposal, the establishment by any other Power of a naval base or fortified post in the Persian Gulf; and in the same year Lord Curzon visited the principal ports of the Gulf with a strong naval squadron. The announcement and the visit considerably strengthened British prestige in an area of great strategic importance to India.

The determination of the Tibetans to seal their country against intercourse with India while employing in a high post a Russian subject named Dorjiev, who had visited Russia recently and been received in audience by the Tsar, led to the despatch of a well-organised military expedition to Tibet. But the way to the capital, Lhasa, was only cleared by a pitiful slaughter of a poorly armed Tibetan force; and the eventual result of the expedition was little more than an extension of geographical knowledge. The suzerainty of China over Tibet was acknowledged; but since China adopted republican institutions, Tibet has again become independent.

The restlessness which followed in the wake of Western education in India was not only religious, social and political, but also economic. It was increased by the fact that in the older provinces, Bengal, Madras and Bombay, the English-educated, disdaining agriculture and manual work, were thronging all avenues to the public services and the legal, educational and medical professions. Industrial employment was less sought after and was restricted by the shyness of Indian capital and the preference of students for a literary education. While, however, prospects of congenial work were narrowing, the cost of living was gradually rising and the standard of comfort, under the influence of increasing intercourse with Europe, was rising too.

What was true to-day of the older provinces with their great seaports and longer-established contact with the West would undoubtedly be true to-morrow of the inland provinces. But for the moment the particular part of India where the problem was most acute was Bengal. There, under the influence of Calcutta and its busy life, the middle classes, including a multitude of small land-holders, were keenly desirous of securing Western education for their sons, and had, at their

own expense, added numerous secondary schools and colleges to those established by the Government and by missionary societies. Self-help of this kind was unusual in India and had been welcomed by the provincial Government, which for some years had gladly left the care of colleges and schools very largely to the Calcutta University authorities and to local committees amenable to the pressure of parents, who were disposed to place cheapness above quality in education. Underpayment of teachers, over-crowding of classes and a disastrous lowering of examination-standards had resulted; and a Calcutta University degree had ceased to carry with it the authority of former days. Other abuses had sprung up; and remedial action was clearly called for in Bengal and elsewhere. Clearly perceiving the national, social and political issues at stake, Lord Curzon devoted all his energy to a strenuous endeavour to raise and broaden the whole educational system. But racial suspicion and vested interests stood in the way; and the very vigour and earnestness of the Viceroy were ascribed by his adversaries to desire to curtail the number of the restless Western-educated.

In spite of much opposition he passed a valuable Universities Act in March 1904; but when he left India prematurely, his work for education was unfinished and had antagonised many of those for whose benefit it had been undertaken. Their resentment was increased by his partition of Bengal.

In 1901 Indians generally had mourned the death of Queen Victoria, whose concern and affection for India admitted of no doubt.

The accession of King Edward was celebrated at Delhi in January 1903, where a great Durbar was attended by H.R.H. the Duke of Connaught. The speech of the Viceroy was full of confidence in the present and the future. Yet in fact the period of unchallenged government which had lasted since the Mutiny was drawing to a close. Among the Western-educated classes, who were dissatisfied with their economic position and had imbibed ideas of nationality and self-government from English politics, history and literature, there was an impatience of existing conditions. Advantage had already been taken of famines, of plague, of difficulties of various kinds, of the chequered events of the Boer War, to depreciate British rule and British efficiency. But the great majority, the ruling princes, the rural and martial classes, the masses, were tranquil and unchanged; and when Lord Curzon left for a rest in England in April 1904 no one imagined that a project then

under public discussion would call forth a tempestuous agitation.

The presidency province of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, with its population of 78,000,000, including the inhabitants of the capital of the Empire, had weighed too heavily on a single provincial Government. The water-country of Eastern Bengal with its abundant rainfall, its precarious and scanty communications, its rich harvests of rice and jute, its teeming population partly concentrated in a few towns but mainly scattered over multitudinous villages, had been largely and inevitably neglected. Some administrative change was desirable; and after much discussion, after personally touring in Eastern Bengal and consulting its leading men, after considering the matter on leave in England, Lord Curzon decided, in consultation with his Executive Council, to combine the existing province with the small neighbouring province of Assam in a new arrangement whereby two new provinces would be constituted, one consisting of Western Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, and the other of Eastern Bengal and Assam.

This arrangement afforded the best prospect of developing the rich and populous eastern districts, but split Bengal proper into two and gave the Muhammadans, who were a minority therein, numerical preponderance in the new eastern province. It was sanctioned by the Secretary of State on June 9, 1905, and announced in India on the 19th of the following month at a season when the final victories of Japan over once-dreaded Russia were everywhere a theme of intense admiration.

The Hindu Bar and Press at Calcutta were already opposed to Lord Curzon's policy, and particularly to any scheme which seemed likely to infringe on the importance of their city as the centre of the legal, journalistic, educational and commercial activities of Bengal. Vested interests too seemed in peril. A loud outcry was raised that the Bengali nation would be cut into two. But the new arrangement was certainly agreeable to the Muhammadan majority in Eastern Bengal; it promised better administration and more rapid development to that spacious area. For centuries before Plassey Bengal had been under Moghal or Afghan domination and the masses of its population had accepted all changes of Government with stolid indifference. The Government therefore held that Hindu political opposition was not based on genuine feeling, omitting perhaps to appreciate the enormous effect of the triumphs of Japan on political sentiment.

The partition was carried out in October 1905; and the new

provinces started on their brief career. Hindu politicians and newspapers, taking the glorious achievements of Japan as a text to preach from, directed supersession of European goods by *swadeshi* (indigenous) products. The former were to be boycotted, and various factories were launched for manufacture of the latter. In order to enlist mass-sympathy, the anti-partition movement was placed under the patronage of Mother Kali, the terrible goddess, and Bengalis were exhorted to remember the exploits of Sivaji. The movement took time to gather force, and the visit to India of their now reigning Majesties, as Prince and Princess of Wales, passed off successfully in the cold season of 1905–6. Lord Curzon had left India on November 18, 1905. Lord Minto, lately Governor-General of Canada, great-grandson of a former Viceroy, had succeeded him; and Mr. John, afterwards Lord, Morley had become Secretary of State, as the representative of a mammoth Liberal majority in the House of Commons.

Lord Curzon's resignation was caused by a difference with the Commander-in-Chief, Lord Kitchener, who was busy with the reorganisation of the Indian army. While the Commander-in-Chief was an Extraordinary Member of the Viceroy's Executive Council, his proposals regarding army administration reached the Viceroy through an Ordinary (Military) Member of the Council, who was at the head of a department of the Government and was always a distinguished soldier. Lord Kitchener advocated the abolition of the Military Member and his department, and the institution of a single army department presided over by the Commander-in-Chief as an Ordinary Member of Council. Lord Curzon, however, and other members of his Council, objected that this innovation would concentrate military authority in the hands of the Commander-in-Chief and would subvert the supremacy of the civil power by depriving it of independent military advice. Lord Kitchener, however, still urged that the Commander-in-Chief's proposals should not be criticised from a military point of view by a Military Member of Council, who must necessarily be his junior in rank and inferior in experience.

The dispute was referred to the expiring Unionist Cabinet in London, who decided on a compromise which convinced the Viceroy that in effect Lord Kitchener's contention was accepted. He therefore resigned. The compromise came into effect and, in the words of Lord Morley, "proved good neither for administration nor economy." The Commander-in-Chief became the Viceroy's military adviser as an Ordinary Member of

Council; and the new arrangement bore evil fruit ten years later.

It is generally forgotten that while Lord Curzon carried out spectacular measures which have been the subject of vehement controversy and conducted the foreign affairs of the Indian Empire with boldness and success, he also left a remarkable and beneficent impression on famine, revenue and police administration.

He never forgot the predominant importance in the body politic of the classes who live by the land, the great majority of the people of India. Their character and circumstances attracted his close attention. Early in his term of office Western and Central India were afflicted by failure of rains and wide destruction of crops. Relief measures were vigorously undertaken on principles laid down in Lord Lytton's days and extended by a famine commission appointed by Lord Elgin's Government. Lord Curzon himself visited the famine area where cholera was active; fodder as well as crops were lacking and great mortality of cattle had ensued. He personally examined the state of affairs and the remedial measures. At the end of July 1900 over 6,500,000 persons were under relief. His Government spared no pains to make this relief effective, and the Viceroy's observations bore fruit in the appointment of a strong famine Commission under Sir Anthony, now Lord, MacDonnell which did much to secure that future famines should be no more than prolonged periods of unemployment accompanied by dear food. Yet always famines in India must be hard to combat. This famine was particularly severe and made extraordinary demands on many Government servants, some of whom lost their lives in the struggle. The State expenditure approached £7,000,000.

The Viceroy's efforts on behalf of the agricultural masses did not end with famine relief. He did much to impart elasticity and careful consideration to the collection of land revenue and, in order to combat rural indebtedness and encourage thrift, started a system of co-operative credit societies which has already won remarkable success. He co-ordinated and stimulated effort for the application of scientific principles to agriculture, a matter of enormous importance to the well-being of India. To the improvement of the police he devoted anxious care. For the betterment of conditions among the people at large no Governor-General has ever taken more constant thought.

His interests were not confined to the present and the future.

For the past, for the noble buildings and memorials of India he showed loving and meticulous care, never wearying in tracing the footsteps of great men of all ages. If toward the end of his term of office he failed fully to appreciate factors of undiscovered potency, if he pressed on reforms too forcibly and incessantly, he will always stand out in history as a Viceroy who gave his whole soul and energy to every detail of his great task. On the civil administration his influence was stimulating. For the people his care was unceasing.

XIX

THE DECADE BEFORE THE WAR

In 1902–3 a small band of Western-educated young Hindus, possessed with the idea that India needed liberation from foreign rule, and attracted by stories of secret societies in Russia, endeavoured to launch a revolutionary movement in Bengal. Their leader, however, was discouraged by a general lack of response to his appeal. The minds of many of his class had indeed been stirred by religious revivalists, who preached that Western materialism was the bane of India and must be conquered by Eastern spirituality, that the aid of the "Mother of Strength" must be invoked. But not until after the arrival of the electrifying news of Japanese victories and the commencement of the anti-Partition campaign with its vehement invectives, its boycott propaganda, its enlistment of schoolboys and students in picketing operations, did the revolutionists make any headway. They were assisted by the fact that anti-Partitionist agitators were vehemently opposed by the Muhammadans of Eastern Bengal, the main theatre of the campaign; for the frequent disturbances which resulted from this circumstance afforded useful cover for subtle and secret operations.

Recruiting zealously from the masses of Hindu youths who thronged far-flung schools and colleges under needy, discontented teachers, the revolutionaries organised societies with extensive ramifications. They gradually collected arms and manufactured bombs; but their immediate purpose was to "build up public opinion," to create an atmosphere which would favour the development of their general plans. For this purpose they published journals and leaflets preaching

violent revolution and omitting no calumny or artifice which could vilify the British race.

For their initiates they prescribed a curious mixture of text-books, including the Bhagavad Gita, the Lives of Mazzini and Garibaldi, books on explosives and military manuals. They reiterated the achievements of Japan; they emphasised the importance of "cautiously spreading the gospel of independence among Indian troops"; they taught that should voluntary subscriptions to the movement fail, money must be extorted from "miserly or luxurious members of society." Everything must be sacrificed to the religious duty of getting rid of the European. India would then recover her ancient glory. Her civilisation had become corrupted first by Muhammadan and then by British cruelty and aggression. The propaganda was supported by gross perversions of history.

In December 1907 the first-fruits of the harvest from these seeds were reaped when the train on which the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal was travelling was derailed by a bomb. In the same month a British district officer was shot in the back in an Eastern Bengal railway-station.

While these doings were in preparation the Congress of December 1906 justified the boycott and requested annulment of the partition. Nevertheless sober politicians were becoming intensely alarmed, although as yet they lacked the resolution to shake off their fanatical associates. A split was for the moment avoided by the adoption of *Swaraj*[1] as a goal. To one Congress school—the "Moderates"—Swaraj meant the establishment of a parliamentary system. To those who were becoming known as Extremists it stood for absolute independence. The President of the Congress declared in English that "self-government" would bring prosperity to all. In the meantime certain preliminaries, such as considerably enlarged Legislative Councils, must be demanded.

The situation was inadequately grasped by the highest authorities. Its graver developments were not anticipated. The Moderates and Extremists combined formed an extremely small element in the populations of India; they belonged to the orderly and peaceful classes; for two years the visible activities of the Revolutionists were hardly distinguishable from those of the anti-Partitionists; and although district and police officers, who were bearing the brunt of the assault with extreme patience and courage, realised increasingly that some climax must come, their views penetrated slowly to a Secretary of

[1] See footnote, p. 31.

State who had persuaded himself that "the over-confident and overworked Tchinovniks"[1] themselves were responsible for the unrest.

In numbers these unfortunate persons were few indeed. In the great water-country which was the main area of disturbances there were at first only ninety-two British Government officers of all descriptions, administrative, judicial, police, medical, educational, public works, to conduct and supervise fourteen extensive districts, mainly devoid of efficient communications, and inhabited by sixteen millions of people. Eastern Bengal, which was receiving pressing attentions from the agitators, was administratively starved. Its sole reserve force consisted of fifty military police. Its civil police were everywhere below strength. Such deficiencies were supplied slowly and gradually.

The Viceroy, a man of pleasant, even, courageous temper, was new to India and would not support the first Lieutenant-Governor of the Province in a determined effort to stop the participation of schoolboys in political meetings. The Lieutenant-Governor, Sir Bampfylde Fuller, resigned; and his resignation was promptly accepted by the Viceroy and Secretary of State. Its effect was disastrous.

Lord Morley's perplexities and gradual conversion to energetic measures are chronicled in his *Recollections*. He was embarrassed by his predilections, by the fact that while declining to reverse the partition he had expressed disapproval of it, and by a section of his party which had taken the anti-Partition movement under its patronage. Together with the Viceroy he was much absorbed in devising constitutional reforms which, by conforming to the spirit of British institutions, might satisfy Indian political demands. But both were agreed that it was "neither desirable, nor possible, nor conceivable to adapt English political institutions to the nations who inhabit India."[2] In April 1907 Lord Minto publicly announced that he had sent home a despatch proposing administrative reforms on a liberal basis.

In the same month it became evident that the ferment in Bengal was bearing fruit elsewhere. Early in 1907 the Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab noted that a "new air" was blowing through men's minds. In April he reported that educated Extremist agitators were pushing a definite anti-English propaganda and were endeavouring to inflame the passions of the Sikhs, by exploiting certain unpopular agrarian

[1] Lord Morley, *Recollections*, vol. ii, p. 265.
[2] Ibid., p. 172.

legislation. Conspirators desired to drive the British from India either by force or by the passive resistance of the people as a whole. Policemen and Indian soldiers were being advised to quit Government service. Twice Europeans had been assaulted as such. The situation was "exceedingly dangerous" and urgently demanded remedy. Riots developed at Lahore and Rawalpindi. The agrarian legislation was vetoed; and the two chief agitators were deported. Trouble immediately subsided.

In 1907 the Moderates and Extremists drew farther apart. In December the Congress met at Surat and ended in tumultuous uproar, the Extremists endeavouring but failing to impose their will on the Moderates by force. For some years afterwards, under the predominating influence of Gopal Krishna Gokhale, a Konkanasth Brahman of great ability, the Congress was Moderate. Certain Extremists identified themselves with revolutionary societies.

On May 23, 1908, at Muzaffarpur in Bihar, two English ladies were assassinated by a Bengali bomb-thrower who intended his missile for a British magistrate; and after this horrible event came the disclosure of a criminal conspiracy. The leader and nineteen of his associates were convicted after open trial. They had been manufacturing bombs and for over two years had launched on the Bengali public a highly inflammatory propaganda. In Bombay Bal Gangadhar Tilak published articles, attributing the murders to the refusal of Swaraj and praising the bomb-throwers. He was tried for endeavouring to provoke enmity and hatred against the Government and between different classes of His Majesty's subjects, was convicted, and was sentenced to six years' imprisonment. Other prosecutions were instituted in Bombay; and the murder of Mr. Jackson, a highly popular district officer, brought to light the existence of a Brahman secret society formed apparently on the Russian model.

The seed which had been sown broadcast in Bengal produced a crop of murders, bomb-outrages, assassinations of Indian police officers, gang-robberies committed against helpless people in far-away villages. The theatre of action was mainly the eastern province and the city of Calcutta itself. The long start which the conspirators had obtained had enabled them to establish a terrorism which rendered it exceedingly difficult to induce witnesses to come forward. The Bengal propaganda produced occasional crime and disorder in other inland provinces, but took little root, partly because of the resolute resistance of Sir John Hewett in the United and Sir Reginald

Craddock in the Central Provinces. Sir George Clarke, afterwards Lord Sydenham, and his Council boldly met and entirely baffled revolutionary activity in Bombay.

Extremely uneasy as to the place which their community would occupy in the reformed Legislative Councils, leading Muslims approached the Viceroy in October 1906, gratefully acknowledging " the peace, security and liberty of person and worship conferred by the British Government," one of the most important characteristics of which was its regard for the wishes of all races and religions. Representative institutions were new to Indians and, in the absence of the greatest caution, dangerous to their national interests. The position of Indian Muhammadans should be estimated not merely on their numerical strength but with regard to their political importance in the Empire. The justice of this claim was admitted in Lord Minto's reply; and thus began concessions of communal representations to minorities. A " Muslim League " came gradually into widespread existence. Its principal promoter, His Highness the Aga Khan, declared that prosperity and contentment could be reached only by processes of devolution and evolution on natural lines. These processes required the existence of a strong, just and stable Government securing justice and equal opportunity to all, minorities as well as majorities. All patriots should strengthen British control under which had been effected " the amazing progress of a century."

On November 2, 1908, the fiftieth anniversary of Queen Victoria's proclamation, King Edward VII issued another proclamation to the Princes and people of India which undertook to repress anarchy, take continuously steps towards obliterating distinctions of race for access to posts of public authority, and " prudently extend the principle of representative institutions." On the 17th of the following month the reforms were announced which had for two years been under careful discussion and consideration. They enlarged the Legislative Councils considerably, giving the provincial bodies non-official majorities composed of elected and nominated sections. Any member could divide his Legislative Council on financial questions; and all Councils would discuss matters of public importance and make recommendations to the Executive Governments. The Executive Councils of the Viceroy and of such provincial Governments as possessed Executive Councils would consist partly of Indian members. The official majority on the Imperial Legislative Council was retained. In

announcing this retention, Lord Morley declared that the new Councils were not designed to pave the way to the establishment of a parliamentary system in India. To that goal he would not " for one moment aspire." His reforms, however, clearly tended in that direction.

The Moderates were gratified; and the novelty and stir of the new Councils pleased the landlords, whose interests had been considered in framing the regulations made under the Act. But the stream of revolutionary crime flowed on in Bengal; and the Extremist press spared no effort to foster hatred of the Government. A courageous stand against its designs was made by Mr. Gokhale in October 1909; and the Viceroy consulted the ruling chiefs, who had themselves been addressed by the Revolutionists in a menacing pamphlet, as to the needs of the situation. The majority represented the urgent importance of curbing effectually the licence of the press. In 1908 two repressive Acts had been passed, one designed to prevent newspaper incitement of offences. But it had borne little fruit. The correspondence resulted in the passing of a Press Act in February 1910 by the newly constituted Imperial Legislative Council. The Act practically substituted forfeiture of security for criminal prosecution, and while conceding a certain amount to executive discretion, tempered that discretion by making orders of forfeiture appealable to a High Court. It immediately produced a salutary change in the atmosphere.

This measure, the outspoken loyalty of the Princes, the reforms, the altered attitude of the Congress, the breaking-up and bringing to trial of two large gangs of Bengali conspirators, the personal popularity of Lord Minto, all combined to make the last year of his troubled term of office comparatively peaceful. The Viceroy's fine courage, love of manly sports, genial, straightforward simplicity, won the hearts of those with whom he came into contact. Toward the end of 1910 he was succeeded by Lord Hardinge of Penshurst, a distinguished diplomatist, grandson of a Governor-General, at that time Permanent Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs. Lord Hardinge received an address of welcome from the Congress and soon earned much popularity by strongly criticising South African treatment of Indian immigrants, and showing sympathy with a passive resistance movement organised in South Africa by Mr. Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, a Hindu barrister from Guzerat in the Bombay Presidency. Lord Hardinge declared that the South African Government should appoint a committee of enquiry into

the grievances complained of, which should contain an Indian element. His speech was severely criticised from a constitutional point of view, but achieved its object. An Act was eventually passed by the South African Government which substantially improved the conditions for Indian immigrants. The Congress had for some years concerned itself in the status of Indian immigrants in the Colonies of the Empire.

On December 12, 1911, King George V and Queen Mary presided over a great Coronation Durbar at Delhi. The royal visit was a brilliant success, leaving memories of the gracious and sympathetic personalities of their Majesties which exercised a powerful influence in India during the troubled years of the war. At the Durbar His Majesty announced that Bengal would no longer be divided. It would be one province under a Governor-in-Council. Assam would become again the charge of a Chief Commissioner. Bihar and Orissa would be the charge of a Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council. The capital of India would henceforth be Delhi and not Calcutta. These changes, which reversed a statement by Lord Morley that the Partition was " a settled fact," created a great sensation. Congress was gratified; but the Muhammadans of the young province of Eastern Bengal and Assam were bitterly annoyed.

A passage in the published despatch of the Government of India was generally interpreted by politicians as foreshadowing self-government on colonial lines. But this interpretation was in June 1912 expressly repudiated by Lord Crewe, then Secretary of State, who stated that to him the existence of an Indian Empire, on the lines of Australia and New Zealand, with no British officials, and no tie of creed and blood " which takes the place of these material bonds," was " as imaginary as any Atlantis that was ever thought of by the ingenious brain of any imaginative writer."

In 1912 a Public Services Commission was appointed to investigate the possibilities of admitting Indians in larger numbers into the higher grades of the various Civil Services. Indianising of the Services had been for some time progressing. The year was further marked by a change in Muslim political sentiment, due partly to the altered partition of Bengal, partly to disgust at the attitude of Britain during the Balkan War and partly to the growing belief that agitation paid best. In March 1913 the Muslim League Association meeting at Lucknow, its headquarters, declared its objects to be " the promotion among Indians of loyalty to the British Crown, the protection of the rights of Muhammadans and, without detri-

ment to the foregoing objects, the attainment of the system of self-government suitable to India." This particular ideal was only adopted after a heated discussion. It was said that if Sir Edward Grey remained arbiter of Britain's foreign policy, the Muslim status in Asia would be swallowed up by Russia.

The revolutionists were now quieter, but were still busy in secret places. In December when the Viceroy and Lady Hardinge, mounted on an elephant, were entering the new capital in state, a bomb was thrown which wounded His Excellency very seriously and killed an attendant. The firm and courageous behaviour of the Viceroy and Vicereine excited general admiration. The late Lady Hardinge had already earned widespread esteem and regard. Her death in England, three years later, was universally mourned.

The assassin was not arrested; and revolutionary societies continued to assert their presence in Bengal by intermittent criminal activities. But their sympathisers had fallen into much disrepute and exercised no influence over the general course of political affairs. The business of the new Councils progressed smoothly and well, although not without the occasional racial friction inseparable from all such bodies.[1] Politicians generally were seeking vaguely for the establishment of a parliamentary system; but all sober thinkers were fully conscious of the advance made by India under Crown government, an advance clearly illustrated by some passages of a farewell speech by a notable Lieutenant-Governor in March 1912:

"When I first became acquainted with this country" (in 1877), said Sir John Hewett,[2] "she had hardly taken her place in the community of nations; the steamers between India and England, and between England and her colonies, were far less frequent and much slower than at present. For every postal article then sent to or received from the United Kingdom or foreign countries forty-two are now despatched or received; for every telegram received from or sent to countries beyond the continent of India three are now received or sent. The aggregate value of the external trade of the country was £84,000,000 sterling; it is now £270,000,000. The mileage of railways in India was then 7,320; it had reached by March 1911, 32,400.[3] Last year over 370,000,000 persons travelled as

[1] See Morley's *Recollections*, vol. ii, p. 340.

[2] G.C.S.I., now M.P.

[3] In the financial year 1920–1 the figure was 37,000.

passengers on the railways, and over 65,000,000 tons of goods were moved on them.[1]

"The post offices are four and a half times as numerous as they were, and letter-boxes nine times as numerous. Between seven and eight articles now pass through the post for one that did then. No less than £30,500,000 sterling were last year remitted by money order. There are five and a half times as many miles of telegraph wires as there were, twelve times as many telegraph offices, and nearly ten times as many telegrams are despatched every day.

"In this province (the United Provinces) there are now thirty-six miles of railway and three miles of metalled road for each mile of either kind that existed then. The cultivated area has increased by nearly 6,000,000 acres—an advance of nearly 12 per cent. The canals are now irrigating an area 55 per cent. greater than they did. Except in Bundelkhand and in districts of the Benares division, where the land is permanently settled, the value of land has risen by 100 to 150 per cent.

"Lawlessness has been much reduced. A peacefully disposed person can live his life with infinitely less danger of being exposed to tyranny and wrong, though, probably amongst the less advanced members of the community, regard for the sanctity of human life is hardly greater than it was a generation ago. The number of institutions coming within the ken of the Department of Public Instruction has increased by 50 per cent.; and the pupils attending them by 114 per cent. With the spread of literacy there has come increased activity in printing and publishing: nearly three publications are published for every one, and the number of newspapers in circulation has doubled.

"Medical relief has become much more general and popular. There are nearly three dispensaries for every one that there was a generation ago, and there are between four and five times as many patients."

The Lieutenant-Governor went on to comment on the advances made in municipal government and continued:

"In rural areas wages have risen greatly, and the improvement in the condition of the ordinary labourer was demonstrated conclusively during the famine operations of 1908.[2] I have seen in Europe—I have seen in Great Britain—individuals

[1] In 1920–1 the figures were 560,000,000 and 87,000,000.

[2] In 1907–8 severe failure of the rains and destruction of crops had been successfully met and countered in the United Provinces.

and whole communities, the members of which, considering the terrible extremes of cold and damp that they have to endure for such long periods at a time, are infinitely worse off not only than the ordinary cultivators but than the ordinary farm labourers in a typical village in this or any other part of India.

"In these remarks no attempt has been made to make anything like a complete comparison between the present and the past, but the facts that I have stated bear eloquent testimony to the silent revolution which is taking place in the conditions of life around us and to the steady progress that has been going on."

PART IV—FROM 1914

XX

1914–15

On June 28, 1914, the Archduke Francis Ferdinand of Austria was murdered at Sarajevo in the Austrian province of Bosnia. The tragedy attracted little notice in India, but was the prelude to a number of remarkable events which have altered profoundly the course of India's history. Pre-war British India has, like an unsubstantial pageant, faded. It has gone. Between us and it lies a gulf which this brief narrative can only imperfectly bridge.

As the climax of August 4 rapidly approached, India remained calm. The monsoon had begun well. Cultivators were busy in their fields. Trade, commerce and business progressed as usual. The surface of affairs was unvexed by any agitation. Relations with Afghanistan and the frontier tribes were good.

In Bengal revolutionary associations were waging a sullen, fitful, subterranean warfare on the Government and their richer fellow-countrymen. In Muslim circles there was some discontent because Great Britain had failed to support or assist Turkey during the struggles of the Balkan War. Nevertheless, when at last the great day of trial came, a striking unanimity disclosed itself among all classes in India which disagreeably surprised the enemies of England. An Indian revolutionary periodical, published in America, had prophesied in December 1913 that when war broke out between Germany and England, fortune would smile on nations ruined by British oppression. The auspicious hour must not pass without a rising in India. On March 6, 1914, the *Berliner Tageblatt* had published an article on "England's Indian Trouble," predicting that the day of reckoning for England would come far sooner than official negligence supposed. The writer took the gloomiest possible view of the British position in India, where, he said, secret societies of revolutionaries were being assisted from outside.

That there were secret societies of revolutionaries was true, but these were a very small section of the populace, even in the province most affected. The general sentiment of the country bore singular testimony to the real character of British rule. The quarrel, moreover, in which Britain took up arms, appealed to the warm Indian imagination; and when on August 8, 1914, the general officers commanding the Lahore and Meerut Divisions received orders to mobilise, the news was greeted by leaders of public opinion as well as by all ranks of the Army, with intense enthusiasm. The destination of the troops was unknown, but the general hope and expectation were that it would be France.

On September 8, 1914, the members of the Imperial Legislative Council met at Simla and listened to the reading of His Majesty's message by the Viceroy. They passed with eager unanimity a resolution of "unswerving loyalty and enthusiastic devotion to their King-Emperor and unflinching support to the British Government." They desired also to express the opinion "that the people of India, in addition to the military assistance now being afforded by India to the Empire, would wish to share in the heavy financial burden now imposed by the war on the United Kingdom," and requested the Government of India "to take this view into consideration, and thus to demonstrate the unity of India with the Empire." The resolution was by desire forwarded to His Majesty's Government. The speeches of the mover, Sir Gangadhar Chitnavis, and his numerous supporters breathed that spirit of sincerity and co-operation which alone can guarantee the future of India. "We know," said Sir Gangadhar, "that our present condition is due to the peace we have enjoyed under the British rule, that our very existence depends upon the continuation of that rule. We cannot, on this occasion, be mere onlookers. Along with our devotion and sympathy, the general idea is to make any contribution that may be required of us." "We aspire," said Mr. (now Sir) Surendranath Banerjee, a leading politician, "to colonial self-government, then we ought to emulate the example of the Colonials, and try to do what they are doing." The Viceroy, in winding up the debate, stated that practically all the ruling Chiefs had placed their military forces and the reserves of their States at the disposal of the Government.

Lord Hardinge's telegram of September 8, 1914, informed the Imperial Cabinet that the rulers of the Native States had "with one accord rallied to the defence of the Empire," offer-

ing their personal services and the resources of their States for the war, that from among the many Princes and nobles who had volunteered for active service, the Viceroy had selected "the Chiefs of Jodhpur, Bikanir, Kishangarh, Ratlam, Sachin, Patiala, Sir Partab Singh, Regent of Jodhpur, the Heir-Apparent of Bhopal and a brother of the Maharaja of Cooch Bihar, together with other cadets of noble families." It added that the Maharaja of Gwalior and the Chiefs of Jaora and Dholpur, together with the Heir-Apparent of Palampur, had been, to their great regret, prevented from leaving their States; that the Viceroy had accepted from twelve States contingents of cavalry, infantry, sappers and transport, besides a camel corps from Bikanir, and that most of these had already embarked. It gave particular instances of the generosity and eager loyalty of the Chiefs. It stated that the same spirit had prevailed throughout British India. Hundreds of telegrams and letters had been received by the Viceroy, expressing loyalty and desire to serve the Government, either in the field or by co-operation in India. They came from communities and associations, religious, political and social, of all classes and creeds, also from individuals offering their resources or asking for opportunity to prove their loyalty by personal service.

In no previous war had the Government of India despatched overseas an expedition exceeding 18,000 in strength. But now an expeditionary force, consisting of two infantry and two cavalry divisions, fully organised and equipped, was provided for France. The two infantry divisions were accompanied by four field artillery brigades in excess of the normal allotment of artillery to divisions on the Indian establishment. Simultaneously a mixed force was sent to East Africa and an infantry brigade to the head of the Persian Gulf. The latter was increased to a complete division after the declaration of war with Turkey. Moreover, a force of approximately six infantry brigades (including one composed of Imperial Service troops from Native States), and one Imperial Service Cavalry brigade, was despatched to Egypt. The strength of the troops sent abroad amounted to 23,500 British and 78,000 Indian ranks.[1] In addition to the above, all but nine of the regular British Infantry battalions in India, as well as the bulk of the regular horse, field and heavy batteries, were sent to England to facilitate the expansion of the Army there. In exchange 29

[1] In 1911 Lord Kitchener estimated that 100,000 could be spared from India in such circumstances. Churchill's *World Crisis*, p. 63.

Territorial field batteries and 35 Territorial battalions were sent from England.

The nature of the services of the Indian corps in France has thus been described by Lord Curzon: "Neither should we forget the conditions under which these Indian soldiers served. They came to a country where the climate, the language, the people, the customs, were entirely different from any of which they had knowledge. They were presently faced with the sharp severity of a northern winter. They, who had never suffered heavy shell-fire, who had no experience of high-explosive, who had never seen warfare in the air, who were totally ignorant of modern trench-fighting, were exposed to all the latest and most scientific developments of the art of destruction. . . . They were consoled by none of the amenities or alleviations, or even the associations of home. . . . They were plunged in surroundings which must have been intensely depressing to the spirit of man. Almost from the start they suffered shattering losses. In the face of these trials and difficulties the cheerfulness, the loyalty, the good discipline, the intrepid courage of these denizens of another clime cannot be too highly praised."[1]

British officers with Indian regiments were, especially at first, very easily picked out by enemy snipers and machine-gunners. They suffered terribly. And when an Indian regiment had lost the greater number of its British officers, its value as a fighting force very seriously declined. In France therefore the original British element in brigades from India was largely strengthened. Casualties in all ranks were extremely heavy. The two divisions which landed at Marseilles in 1914 were 24,000 strong. So severely did they suffer that in about eight months drafts, 30,000 strong in all, were needed to replace casualties. The force was transferred to Mesopotamia, where it rendered further arduous service.

But we must return to India as she stood in the critical winter of 1914–15. Although throughout the country the general attitude of the people was thoroughly friendly, and although the late Mr. B. G. Tilak, on release from prison in August, had disclaimed hostility to the Government and condemned the acts of revolutionary violence which had previously been committed in various parts of India, the situation was not devoid of disquieting features.

Before the close of the year 1914 Tilak and his followers endeavoured to obtain readmission to the Congress "in order

[1] *Indian Corps in France*, p. xii

to organise obstruction to the Government in every possible direction within the limits of the law"[1] as a means of obtaining Swaraj. Working through the Congress, or by starting a new organisation to be called "the National League," the leader of the Extremists hoped to bring the administration to a standstill and compel capitulation of the authorities. But his hour had not yet come. The Madras Congress of 1914 (in which he took no share) reflected the loyal spirit of the Moderates who had vanquished him in 1908.

Northern India, however, was menaced by certain dangers. In Calcutta intermittent revolutionary activity was stimulated by the successful theft of 50 Mauser pistols and 46,000 rounds of Mauser ammunition from the warehouse of a firm of gun-makers. In the Punjab grave peril speedily took shape. Its prelude was the disastrous Budge-budge riot in Bengal, the incidents of which are particularly instructive.

For some years Sikhs and Punjabis, attracted by hope of high wages and a spirit of adventure, had been emigrating to the Far East, America, Canada and British Columbia. Various Indian settlers in these countries had been led to believe that India could be converted to a Utopia where all would be equal, and plague and famine would cease to exist, if only the British could be expelled. For three years an Indian revolutionary association had been working in the United States for the promotion of rebellion and murder in India and had circulated a newspaper, *The Ghadr* (*War*), in furtherance of this cause. In Canada certain immigration laws were much resented by Indian colonists; and a Sikh named Gurdit Singh, who originally came from the Amritsar district of the Punjab and had for some time carried on business as a contractor in Singapore and the Malay States, determined to challenge those laws. He chartered a Japanese vessel, named the *Komagata Maru*, and on April 29, 1914, sailed from Hong Kong to Vancouver with a shipload of 351 Sikh and 21 Punjab Muhammadan emigrants, ignoring the fact that Asiatics who wished to be allowed to settle in Canada must satisfy the authorities that they had travelled from their own country on a through ticket. The *Komagata Maru* took in all her passengers at various far-eastern ports. She also received consignments of the *Ghadr* newspaper, and at Yokohama was boarded by two Indian revolutionaries from the United States.

On May 23 she arrived at Vancouver, but the local authori-

[1] See *Life of Sir Pherozeshah Mehta* (Mody), vol. ii, pp. 654–56 (letter of Mr. Gokhale).

ties would only allow landing in a few cases, as the immigrants had ignored the requirements of the Law. While protests were proceeding, revolutionary literature was introduced and circulated on board; and it was only when a Government vessel with armed force was requisitioned that the *Komagata Maru* passengers would allow their captain to weigh anchor.

On July 23, in a very bad temper, they started on their return journey to Asia with an ample stock of provisions supplied by the Canadian Government. The ship made for Calcutta. On September 27, 1914, she arrived at the mouth of the Hughli and two days later was moored at Budge-budge. The passengers largely refused to enter a special train which was waiting to carry them, free of cost, to the Punjab. Many were armed with American revolvers and wished to march on Calcutta, furious with a Government which was in no way responsible for their disappointment; but to their minds the Governments of the United Kingdom, British India and the Colonies were all one and the same. Permission for their march was refused. A riot ensued in which eighteen Sikh passengers were killed. Sixty emigrants got off in the train; some were arrested, but the majority were soon at large in the Punjab.

News of the affray spread rapidly with exaggerations, and produced an unfortunate effect. Thousands of other emigrants rapidly returned to the Punjab from Canada, the United States, the Philippines, Hong Kong and China, many of whom had been more or less infected by revolutionary propaganda. Endeavours were made to control such arrivals by means of an ingress ordinance; but effectual discrimination was impracticable. A section of the new arrivals in the Punjab speedily made its presence felt. The first of a long series of outrages occurred on the night of October 16, when a railway-station was attacked, the station-master shot and the cash carried off.

Of the Punjab people 11 per cent. were Sikhs, 33 per cent. were Hindus and 55 per cent. were Muhammadans. Its urban populations were known to contain disaffected elements. Its agriculturists had long supplied some of the finest soldiers in the Army. Excitable by nature, they are peculiarly susceptible to impassioned appeal. On Turkey's adhesion to the cause of Germany, the Government had endeavoured to soothe Muhammadan sentiment by announcing that the holy places of Arabia and shrines of Mesopotamia would be immune from attack by Great Britain and her allies so long as Indian pil-

grims to those venerated places remained unmolested. Now, however, a new danger threatened the Punjab.

Taking counsel with revolutionists from Bengal, some returned emigrants prepared to strike without delay. Mail-bags were robbed; attempts were made to derail trains; soldiers were solicited to renounce their allegiance; a bomb-factory was established; gang-robberies rapidly increased; a campaign of seditious violence was supported by the lawless elements of the populace; a declaration of war was drawn up; instruments for destroying railways and telegraph wires were collected. Simultaneous risings were planned. But fortunately the Punjab was in firm and resolute hands. Armed, after two earnest applications, with extensive powers under a special Defence of India Act, the Lieutenant-Governor, Sir Michael O'Dwyer, and his officers, with the assistance of the loyal majority and of the Rulers of the Punjab States, effectually baffled the whole conspiracy. Its ramifications were only apparent later when nine batches of the revolutionists were brought to trial.

For a brief space these troubles affected Sikh recruiting unfavourably; but their influence was counteracted by the news of the noble self-sacrifice of the 14th Sikhs at Gallipoli; and before the close of 1915 the Punjab was quiet. In that year this province contributed 46,000 out of 93,000 combatants recruited in all India. In 1916 it gave 50,000 out of 104,000. A source of danger had been converted into a source of strength.

In other parts of India a vague sense of insecurity had found expression in large withdrawals from savings banks and had been increased by the exploits of the German cruiser *Emden* at Penang and Madras, and her captures of British shipping. Her achievements were magnified by popular rumour; and when, on November 9, 1914, she was destroyed by the *Sydney*, the service rendered to India's seaboard by the British Navy was thoroughly appreciated.

Revolutionary activity in Bengal and the Punjab necessitated the passing by the Imperial Legislative Council in March 1915 of a "Criminal Law Amendment Act" which corresponded to the British Defence of the Realm Act. The powers which it gave to the Executive were to last during the continuance of the war and for six months after its close.

An invasion by some frontier tribesmen in 1915 terminated in two British-Indian victories. Revolutionary crimes continued in Bengal; and in the North-west Frontier Province the participation of Turkey in the war produced subdued but

constant ferment. But the harvests of 1915 were good; and the masses generally became less apprehensive as the war went on without disturbing their sheltered lives. Across the seas war-operations in Mesopotamia were demanding increasing attention from the Government of India.

On November 22, 1914, Basra had been occupied by a British-Indian division after various skirmishes. The oil-installation in the island of Abadan in the Persian Gulf, belonging to the Anglo-Persian Oil Company, which was of special importance to the British Admiralty, had previously been secured. The town of Kurma, 50 miles above Basra at the junction of the Tigris and Euphrates, was next occupied, and thus the control of the whole navigable waterway to the Gulf was ensured. The British-Indian force on the spot was gradually strengthened by a second division, and later was reorganised as an Army Corps. On April 9, 1915, General Sir John Nixon took command.

After more fighting the position of the whole force was consolidated; but medical equipment and river-steamer transport were both inadequate. The idea then was to control completely the lower part of Mesopotamia, the Basra Province; a plan, however, was to be prepared for a prospective advance on Baghdad. It was also desired to secure the safety of the oil-fields, pipe-line and refineries of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company. In pursuance of all these objects, Amara and Nasariyah were occupied; and on September 29, 1915, Qut-el-Amara was captured, after severe fighting, by an advanced force under General Townshend. All these successes had been achieved by striking quickly and continuously. "Audacity had accomplished wonders. Was there any limit to its possibilities?"[1] It was now determined to embark on an adventurous offensive and to march on Baghdad. The history of this change of purpose is written in the Report of the Mesopotamian Commission.

But already river-transport and medical equipment had proved deficient. The new enterprise emphasised these deficiencies. It failed; and after much gallant effort General Townshend was driven back to Qut-el-Amara with a loss of over 30 per cent. of his force. His sick, wounded and prisoners were evacuated and sent downstream to Basra. His cavalry brigade departed; and with the rest of his troops he remained to hold Qut-el-Amara on the understanding that he would be relieved as soon as possible, with the aid of reinforcements from

[1] Report of the Mesopotamian Commission.

France and elsewhere. Qut-el-Amara was definitely invested by the Turks on December 7, 1915.

Politics were entirely quiescent in 1915. In December the Congress and Muslim League met at Bombay. The President of the former body, the present Lord Sinha, said that an ideal was required to satisfy the ambitions of the rising generation and arrest anarchism. That ideal should be the establishment of democracy " pure and simple." At present, however, India was unfit for self-government. Free from England, and with no real power of resistance, she would be immediately in the thick of another struggle of nations. A committee was appointed to consider a " Home Rule" scheme propounded by Mrs. Annie Besant, a lady long prominent in Indian politics; and arrangements were made to facilitate the return of the Extremists to the Congress fold. It was understood that their leaders had accepted colonial self-government as their objective.

The speech of the President of the Muslim League emphasised the need for " self-government suitable to the needs of the country under the ægis of the British Crown," and concluded with expression of the hope that when peace came, Muslim countries would be dealt with in such a way as to preserve their dignity.

XXI

THE DECLARATION OF 1917

During the first three months of 1916 things went well in India, although the unsuccessful attempts to relieve General Townshend's much-tried force in Qut-el-Amara were disheartening.

Early in April Lord Hardinge of Penshurst left India after an eventful and arduous viceroyalty which had lasted five years and six months. In bidding farewell to his Legislative Council he emphasised the fact that the development of self-governing institutions elsewhere had been achieved not by sudden strokes of statesmanship, but by a process of steady and patient evolution which had gradually united and raised all classes of the community.

One effect of the publication of the Report of the Mesopotamian Commission was to depreciate the services which Lord Hardinge rendered to India and his own country during the

first two years of war. It is easy to be wise after the event, to point out that more confidence should have been shown at such and such a juncture, more use might have been made of resources, too much regard was paid to possibilities in India itself and too little to the needs of the Empire at large. But the Viceroy who steered the Indian Empire through the untracked seas of the first twenty months of a world-wide war deserves well of England. All through, Lord Hardinge's bearing was firm and courageous; his personal influence was distinct and strong; his popularity with Indians contributed materially to the tranquillity of the political atmosphere. To the day of his departure he worthily upheld the prestige of his great office. He had been staunchly supported by successive Secretaries of State, first by Lord Crewe and afterwards by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.

He was succeeded by Lord Chelmsford, who, on the date of his appointment, had been for a year and more serving in India as Captain in a territorial regiment. The new Viceroy had previously been Governor of Queensland and New South Wales. He brought to his onerous task unlimited zeal and industry as well as the idea that it was incumbent on the Imperial Government to make a new departure, to declare a goal or objective for British rule in India. The subject of post-war reforms had been discussed by Lord Hardinge's Government. Various ideas had been explored; but no particular objective had been laid down. Now Lord Chelmsford took the matter up and pressed for a declaration of the kind which he desired.

It was some time before any word of Lord Chelmsford's aims reached the Indian public. Early in his administration revolutionary crime in Calcutta and Bengal at last received a decisive check from vigorous measures adopted under the Defence of India Act.

On April 29, 1916, Qut-el-Amara fell to the Turks after a gallant and tenacious defence of 147 days. The relieving force had been weak in artillery, high-explosive shells and other appliances. The transport, too, had been inadequate, and the weather had been unpropitious. After the capture of the place, a defensive policy was adopted by the General in command of the relieving force. River and railway communications, supply and medical organisation, were gradually improved. Early in the preceding February the War Office had relieved the Indian Government of control of the expedition. In August a Commission was appointed in England to enquire into the "origin, inception and conduct" of the Mesopo-

tamian operations, together with the responsibility of the departments of Government concerned therein.

Neither the siege of Qut nor its disastrous termination produced any visible effect in India.

In June 1916 it became known in India that the Grand Sharif of Mecca had revolted from the spiritual and temporal suzerainty (Khilafat) of the Sultan of Turkey. The Grand Sharif was chief of the Arabs of the Hejaz, and belongs to the Koreish tribe which the Prophet Muhammad designated as his heirs. For long the Sultans and Sharifs had acted in harmony, the Sharifs acknowledging the Khilafat of the Sultans in return for protection and subsidies. In early times, however, the Ottoman Sultans had not assumed the title of Khalifa, and the Hejaz had owed them no allegiance.

The reasons for the Sharif's revolt were defined, in a proclamation which he subsequently issued, to be the proceedings of the Turkish Committee of Union and Progress, their departure from the principles of the Koran, their contumelious treatment of the Sultan, their "bloody and inhuman outrages on Muslims." It was natural that the British Government should sympathise with the Sharif. They were aware that the Turks and Germans purposed to make the Hejaz and Yemen coasts the basis of attacks on British vessels and commerce. The Allies had of course undertaken to respect the safety and sanctity of the holy places of Islam in Arabia ; but these were now in jeopardy from other sources, and the Hejaz was in danger of Turko-German military occupation.

The rebellion, however, was keenly resented by Muhammadan politicians in India. They considered that it might lead to desecration of the holy places, and they resented a telegram which had appeared in a newspaper to the effect that the Calcutta Muslims sympathised with the Sharif. They believed that the Sharif had acted with British encouragement, and were unaware of the grave military considerations involved. They considered the Sharif incapable of maintaining independent sovereignty over the sacred places in Mesopotamia and Arabia. On June 27 a public meeting, convened at Lucknow, the headquarters of the Muslim League, condemned the revolt and those who sympathised therewith as enemies of Islam.

The promoters of this movement were, however, plainly informed that such an agitation amounted to working on behalf of the enemies of His Majesty the King-Emperor and could not be tolerated. The warning was believed and therefore proved efficacious. The agitation was not taken up by

the religious leaders, and consequently at that time took no root among the masses.

From April 1916 onwards Mrs. Besant and Tilak industriously pushed on a new " Home Rule " movement by newspapers and speeches. The tone of these effusions soon brought each into conflict with the law. Mrs. Besant forfeited security deposited under the provisions of the Press Act. Tilak was bound over by a district magistrate to give substantial security for his good behaviour, but the order was revoked by the Bombay High Court. Every effort was made by the Home Rulers to enlist schoolboys and students among their adherents. The doctrine taught was that British rule in India, as then established, was injurious to liberty, and that an effective demand for Home Rule must be organised without delay. Excitement among the political classes culminated in the December gatherings at Lucknow.

We have now arrived at the beginning of a new stage in the domestic history of India during the Great War. This stage was reached at a time when absolute tranquillity prevailed among the general population of the country. The harvests of 1916 were good ; the people were peaceful and contented. The existing system of administration, solely responsible to the Parliament of Great Britain, had carried India through the sharpest of tests so successfully as to vindicate itself effectually from countless slanders whereby it had been assailed. We shall now trace the course of events which were to bring it to an end with surprising rapidity.

For two years and more the political classes had preserved a well-nigh unbroken silence. But under the stimulating influence of the Home Rule movement they now lifted up their voice. They did not belong to the fighting races from which Indian War Contingents had been drawn ; and while they took pride in the achievements of those contingents, they were beginning to wonder what implications the constant assertions that Britain and her allies were fighting the battle of democracy would carry for India. Their leaders had also conceived the idea that peace might come suddenly, and that if it found them without regularly formulated and published demands, it would bring them inconsiderable gains. The Irish rebellion of the preceding April and the subsequent policy of the Imperial Cabinet had attracted their keen attention. A bold and acquisitive policy of the Besant-Tilak order seemed most likely to bear substantial fruit.

With the Congress and Muslim League meetings of December

1916, which were held at Lucknow, we enter on a new phase of domestic affairs. It was then that, advancing far beyond the limits suggested by the cautious utterances of a year before, both bodies, composing all differences, declared together for "Home Rule." At the same time Congress Moderates and Extremists proclaimed their reunion. The proceedings of all the meetings were orderly and the speeches composed in tone; but there were evidences that although the Extremists had accepted the ideal of the Moderates, the former had in fact prevailed over the latter. The reception accorded to Mr. Tilak far exceeded in enthusiasm the welcome given to any other Nationalist leader.

A list of demands was formulated by the Congress and Muslim League in consultation and was publicly accepted. These demands were based on the claim that India must become a self-governing, independent unit of the British Empire and embodied much that was afterwards conceded. After long private discussion, the leaders of the two bodies agreed on separate electorates for Muhammadans. They also set forth the proportion of the seats to be reserved for these electorates.

Speakers on both bodies complained of the measures adopted under the Defence of India Act, but did not suggest any alternative arrangement. The Chairman of the Muslim League, in allusion to recent events in Arabia and Mesopotamia, asked that Muhammadans might be allowed to choose their own Khalifa. Both associations decided to co-operate with the Home Rule League. Favoured by the sense of self-esteem produced by the conduct of Indian soldiers during the war, the effect of these meetings was to spread and intensify nationalist doctrines among the educated classes.

While the politicians had been holding their meetings, the country had been entirely quiet, and the Government had been mainly absorbed in war activities. An Industrial Commission, appointed on May 19, 1916, in order to examine and report upon the possibilities of further industrial development, had begun to tour the country. At the February 1917 sessions of the Imperial Legislative Council, Lord Chelmsford announced that the Report of the Royal Commission on Public Services appointed in 1912, which had just been published, would be carefully considered. The increased employment of Indians in the higher branches of the service would be taken into consideration without delay. The expediency of broadening the basis of government and the demand of Indians to play a

large part in public affairs were receiving attention. An Indian War Loan would soon be launched; and a Defence Force would be organised which would include Indians. India would be represented by three selected delegates at the coming War Conference in London.

The sessions proceeded smoothly. Sir William Meyer, the Finance Member, announced that on March 1, in pursuance of resolutions moved by Indian non-official members and carried on September 8, 1914, and February 24, 1915, the Government of India had informed the home Government of their willingness to borrow the largest sums that could be raised as a War Loan, in order to make a special contribution of £100,000,000. They would also put forward proposals for increasing Indian resources in order to meet the consequent recurring liabilities. One method of meeting the contribution would be the raising of the impost on cotton fabrics from 3½ to 7½ per cent., the general Indian tariff rate. But the cotton excise duty would remain 3½ per cent. A grievance of twenty years' standing which had virtually meant protection for Lancashire was thus removed. The announcement was received with enthusiasm, and the financial proposals were approved. Before the sessions closed came the news of revolution in Russia and of the taking of Baghdad by British and Indian troops.

Outside, however, the press was in a bad humour. A deputation approached the Viceroy on March 5, asking for repeal of the Press Act, and His Excellency in a carefully reasoned reply pointed out that there were still journals in circulation which ascribed all evils to the course of an alien Government, which deliberately encouraged a lack of discipline and of respect for all authority among impressionable boys, thereby swelling the ranks of secret revolutionaries. He therefore rejected the petition in firm but courteous terms. Resentment was expressed; and Mrs. Besant busily pursued her Home Rule campaign, in such a manner as gradually to persuade the Government of Madras, the headquarters of her activities, that she was doing serious mischief. She was, therefore, together with her two principal lieutenants, directed to take up her residence in one of various specified healthy localities, to cease lecturing and publishing and to submit her correspondence to censorship. She took leave of her public in a letter to the press in which she described herself as having been "drafted into the modern equivalent for the Middle Ages oubliette." Indian taxation to pay the interest on the War Loan would be crushing. She had striven for Home Rule after the war

as only by that could India be saved from becoming " a nation of coolies for the enrichment of others."

Mrs. Besant's internment had been preceded by the return from the Imperial War Conference of the delegates selected by the Government of India, His Highness the Maharajah of Bikanir, Sir James (now Lord) Meston, Lieutenant-Governor of the United Provinces, and Sir Satyendra (now Lord) Sinha, then Member of the Bengal Executive Council. For the first time an Indian Prince and an Indian Member of Council had shared in the innermost deliberations of the Empire. But this auspicious event in no way allayed the vigorous agitation among the political classes which followed on the internment of Mrs. Besant. Passive resistance even was proposed and discussed.

In the meantime the Mesopotamian Commission had reported in England, to the effect that Lord Hardinge's government had struggled hard to wage war on a peace-budget, that thus the wants of the Mesopotamian Expedition had, during the first sixteen months of the operations, been provided for insufficiently. " The Government of India rather than the governed had been laggards." Various measures recently taken by Lord Chelmsford and his advisers should have been adopted by their predecessors. The Commission animadverted on the system of military administration in control of the Indian Army. Their report justified in the fullest manner the determined opposition of Lord Curzon in 1905 to the abolition of the Military Member of Council. It is safe to say that but for that disastrous step, Lord Hardinge and his Government would have occupied a far stronger position for appreciating accurately the military requirements of a most difficult situation.

The Mesopotamia Report was considered in both Houses of Parliament. It was keenly debated, and led, among other things, to the resignation of Mr. Austen Chamberlain, who was succeeded as Secretary of State of India by the Hon. Edwin Samuel Montagu. Mr. Montagu had previously served as Under-Secretary of State for India, had visited that country, and had taken a prominent part in the recent debate, urging that the whole system of government in India should be explored in the light of the Report. That system was, he said, insufficient and wooden. It was not elastic enough to express the will of the Indian people, to make them into a warring nation as they wanted to be. They must be allowed growing control of the Executive. The creation of self-governing provinces co-ordinated with the Ruling States by a Central Government

should be declared to be the goal of British rule in India. A substantial step should be taken towards it.

Mr. Chamberlain, in following Mr. Montagu, urged the House not to make the discussion of the Report the text for a great debate upon the future of the Indian Empire. The question of political reforms in India, to be carried out after the close of the war, was under the consideration of the Cabinet. But "nothing but injury could come to National, Imperial and Indian interests from mixing up a debate on a military break-down, or alleged military mismanagement, with the question of the whole future fabric of Indian Government." The effect of the debate was to diffuse the wrong impression that the whole existing system of Government in India was responsible for the Kut catastrophe.

Shortly after Mr. Montagu's assumption of office, on August 20, 1917, two memorable announcements were made by the Secretary of State for India. The first stated that the policy of His Majesty's Government was that of increasing association of Indians in every branch of administration; and the gradual development of self-governing institutions, with a view to the progressive realisation of responsible government in India as an integral part of the British Empire. Substantial steps in this direction would be taken as soon as possible. The Secretary of State would proceed to India to discuss with the Viceroy what those steps should be. Progress in the new policy could only be achieved by successive stages. "The British Government and the Government of India, on whom the responsibility lies for the welfare and advancement of the Indian peoples, must be the judges of the time and measure of each advance, and they must be guided by the measure of co-operation received from those upon whom the new opportunities of service will thus be conferred, and by the extent to which it is found that confidence can be reposed in their sense of responsibility. Ample opportunity will be afforded for public discussion of the proposals which will be submitted in due course to Parliament."

The second announcement related to the removal of the bar which had up till then precluded the admission of Indians to commissioned rank in His Majesty's Army.

The September sessions of the Legislative Council opened with a speech by Lord Chelmsford which contained a remarkable record of war-activities. He concluded with an earnest appeal to leading politicians for co-operation and for the promotion of calm and dispassionate consideration of the difficult

problems which were to be investigated during Mr. Montagu's stay in India. The Viceroy's speech had been preceded by the announcement made by the Home Member of Council that Mrs. Besant and her coadjutors would be released from all restrictions if the Government of India were satisfied that they would abstain from unconstitutional and violent methods of political agitation during the remainder of the war. They were released.

Before the arrival of the Secretary of State violent Hindu-Muslim riots broke out in Bihar, over cow-killing, an old cause of contention. The riots were on a scale which far exceeded any previous trouble of the same kind, and were undoubtedly largely due to a belief that Britain was exhausted by the efforts of the war, and that British rule was sinking into weakness and decline. The Hindus were the aggressors; the Muhammadans were on the defensive throughout. In other provinces things were quiet.

XXII

THE REFORMS PROPOSALS

THE object of Mr. Montagu's visit to India was to decide on the spot, and in consultation with the Viceroy, what steps should be taken in the direction of establishing in India a Government responsible to the various peoples of the sub-continent. He arrived with a small party of helpers, late in the year 1917, and after preliminary conferences with the Government and the heads of provinces, visited Calcutta, Madras and Bombay. The party was accompanied by the Viceroy and the Home Member of His Excellency's Executive Council. At each halting-place various officials and non-officials were consulted; and it was not until the end of April 1918 that the Secretary of State returned to England.

The tour attracted universal attention. It was understood that the old order had been sentenced to death. So European non-officials and many Indian communities had appointed representative councils to draw up petitions embodying their proposals for the future. The Viceroy and Secretary of State were beset by demands that in the new era, which had been announced, the interests of numerous sections of society should not be left to the arbitrament of any general numerical majority. Not only Europeans, but Muhammadans, Sikhs, Marathas, Eurasians, Indian Christians, depressed classes, the tenants of

the Deccan and others, expressed a firm conviction that from territorial electorates they would not meet with fair consideration.

The Congress and Muslim League recommended a constitution which would embody the provisions framed at their meetings of 1916. In December 1917 both bodies met at Calcutta. The attendance was large, but the Moderates and Extremists were unhappy together.

In March and April 1918 the British reverses in France arrested the attention of the whole country; and in the latter month the Viceroy, at the instance of the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, summoned the ruling chiefs and the leading non-official representatives of India to a conference at Delhi. The object was to arrange that all possible assistance in the shape of men, money and supplies should be given to the cause of the Allies. The Conference took place after the return of the Secretary of State to England. Sub-committees were appointed to devise ways and means; and speeches were delivered, which breathed a spirit of loyalty to the British Crown. A Home-Leaguer, however, employed the opportunity to propose a resolution recommending to the British Government immediate introduction into Parliament of a Bill "meeting the demands of the people for the establishment of a responsible Government in India within a reasonable and specified period." The resolution was disallowed by the Viceroy as foreign to the purposes of the Conference.

Conferences were also held at provincial centres. A great impulse was given to war-efforts of all kinds, especially recruiting, which made remarkable progress in the United Provinces and Punjab; but simultaneously the Home Rule Leaguers manifested a growing intention to turn the difficulties of the hour to political advantage. The differences which had in fact never ceased to exist between them and many Moderates widened. The Reforms proposals were published on July 8 and were greeted with contumely by the Home Rule leaders, but were welcomed by the Moderates, who decided not to attend the special Congress which was to be arranged for discussion of the scheme, as the Home Rule League and its branches had captured the various provincial Congress Committees. They intended, however, themselves to ask for some alterations in the scheme.

The first part of the Report of the Viceroy and Secretary of State consisted of a lucid statement of the situation. The second part set forth the following proposals:

(*a*) *Local Self-government*

In local bodies (Municipal and District Boards) there should be complete popular control and the largest possible independence of outside control. The new policy must be to allow these boards to learn by their own mistakes and to interfere only in cases of grave mismanagement. The district officer must accept the position of an onlooker.

(*b*) *The Provinces*

In each province an enlarged Legislative Council should be established, differing in size and composition from province to province, with a substantial non-official majority chosen *by direct election* on a broad franchise, modified by such communal and special representation as might be necessary. The exact composition of each Council would be determined by the Secretary of State in Council on the recommendation of the Government of India, after investigation by a specially appointed Franchise Committee which would determine the composition of the electorates as well as of the Councils.

At the head of a Provincial Executive would be a Governor with an Executive Council of two members, one Englishman and one Indian, both nominated by the Governor. Associated with the Executive Council as part of the Government would be one or more Ministers chosen by the Governor from among the elected members of the Legislative Council and holding office for three years, the term of that Council.

The functions of the Provincial Government would be divided into those which might immediately be made over to ministerial control and those which for the present must remain in official hands. Functions would be called "transferred" and "reserved." The former would be such departments as education or local self-government which "afford most opportunity for local knowledge or social service, in which serious mistakes would not be irremediable, which stand most in need of development." The latter would be such subjects as law and order or revenue administration. The Governor-in-Council would have charge of the "reserved" functions. The control of the "transferred" functions would lie with the Governor and his Ministers. In regard to these the Governor would meet the wishes of his Ministers to the fullest possible extent. He could, however, veto their proposals if necessary.

The division of functions into "reserved" and "transferred"

would be carried out on the report of a Committee similar in constitution to the proposed Franchise Committee, with which it would work in close co-operation.

Elaborate proposals were framed for securing the passage of necessary legislation, which were subsequently discarded in favour of less cumbrous arrangements.

The Governor could dissolve a Legislative Council. The assent of the Governor, the Governor-General, and the Crown, through the Secretary of State, would be necessary for all provincial legislation.

The provincial budget would be framed by the Executive Government as a whole. The first charge would be the contribution to the central Government. Then would come the supply for reserved subjects; but so far as transferred subjects were concerned, the allocation of supply would rest with the Ministers. The budget would then be laid before the Council, and voted by resolution. It could be altered by resolution, except in regard to such allotment for reserved subjects as the Governor considered necessary.

It was intended that as the popular element on the Government acquired knowledge and experience, functions would be taken from the reserved list and placed upon the transferred list, until at length the reserved functions would disappear and the goal of complete provincial responsibility would be reached.

(*c*) *The Central Government*

For the Government of India it was proposed to create an enlarged "Legislative Assembly" with an elected majority, and to reserve for the decision of a new "Council of State," on which Government would command a bare majority, only those measures which Government must retain power to carry in discharge of its continued responsibility for the good administration of the country. Resolutions of the Assembly would have force only as recommendations whether in regard to fiscal or other matters. It was proposed to admit a second Indian member to the Viceroy's Executive Council. Pending the development of responsible Government in the provinces, the Central Government must remain responsible only to Parliament.

Electorates and constituencies for the Central Legislature should be determined by the coming Franchise and Functions Committees. The strength of the Legislative Assembly would be about a hundred; the maximum number of nominated

officials thereon would be two-ninths; the lifetime of each Assembly would be three years.

The Council of State would be composed "of about fifty members exclusive of the Governor-General," who would be President. Not more than twenty-five members would be officials, and four would be nominated by the Governor-General. The Council of State would possess a senatorial character; and the qualifications of candidates for election would be framed so as to secure men of a status and position worthy of a revising chamber. Five years would be the normal duration of a Council of State.

Parliament and the Secretary of State must be prepared to forgo control in respect of matters in which responsibility was now to be transferred to Indian representative bodies. This process would continue as responsibility in the provinces, and eventually in the Central Government, gradually developed. The India Office would be reorganised. A Committee would examine its position, and make proposals. The salary of the Secretary of State would be defrayed from home revenues, and voted annually by the Imperial Parliament. A Select Committee of the House of Commons would provide informed criticism and discussion of questions connected with India.

The Native States

There would be a Council of Princes, a consultative body meeting ordinarily once a year to discuss agenda with the Viceroy, who would be President. The Viceroy might, when he thought fit, arrange for joint deliberation and discussion between the Council of State and the Council of Princes.

Appointments would be made to all branches of the public service without racial distinction. Thirty-three per cent. of the recruits for the covenanted Civil Service would be recruited in India, and this percentage would be increased by one and a half per cent. annually for ten years. In other services there would be a fixed percentage of Indian recruitment, rising annually.

It was further proposed that ten years after the first meeting of the new Councils a Committee should be appointed by Parliament to enquire into the working of all these reforms, and to report to Parliament thereon. The further course of constitutional development in the country would be investigated by similar Committees appointed at intervals of not more than ten years. The authors of the report expressed the view that "so far in the future as any man can foresee,

a strong element of Europeans would be required in the public services. The continued presence of the British officer was essential if the Indian people were to be made self-governing." The reformers strongly condemned communal electorates, but conceded these to the Muhammadans in provinces where the latter are in a minority, and to the Sikhs in the Punjab. In the former case they were bound by previous pledges; in the latter they were moved by the military services which the Sikhs, a very small community, had rendered to the Empire.

The Report explained the chief difficulties presented by the problem to be solved. British India had two and a half times the population of the United States. Two of its major provinces held each as many people as the British Isles. But whereas in England and Wales four-fifths of the people lived in towns, 226,000,000 out of 244,000,000 of people in British India lived a rural life, and only a very small proportion of these ever gave a thought to matters beyond the horizon of their villages. In one province, it was reported, 93 per cent. of the people lived and died in the place where they were born. Many knew of no executive power above the district officer, and had never heard of Parliament or even of the Legislative Councils.

The reformers quoted Lord Dufferin's picture of the races, castes and creeds which divide Indian society, but held that its colours had since toned down. A sense of unity had grown which was displacing the idea of ordained separation. It was fostered by growing communion of thought among educated Indians, and between educated India and England. On the other hand, in some tracts of India it would be fantasy to dream of representative institutions; and everywhere there were people too ignorant and "depressed" to be included within the limits of any franchise. At the census of 1911 only 6 per cent. of the population of British India had been able to read and write a letter in their own script. The proportion had since risen. But it was clear that the political changes contemplated by the Declaration must end in disaster unless accompanied by an educational campaign directed to awakening in all classes, especially in agriculturists, a sense of citizenship. Both officials and candidates for election must assist in this campaign. The peasant must learn how to use his vote. An immense work of education must be done in the countryside, which could be, and ought to be, undertaken by educated Indians themselves.

It now probably would be, because there was no education

like responsibility. The reformers held that the logic of events, the implication of past reforms, the professions of Allied statesmen, contributed to make the momentous departure already prescribed by the Declaration imperative. "We believe profoundly," they said, "that the time has now come when the sheltered existence which we have given India cannot be prolonged without damage to her national life; . . . that nationhood within the Empire represents something better than anything India has hitherto attained; that the placid, pathetic contentment of the masses is not the soil on which Indian nationhood will grow, and that in deliberately disturbing it, we are working for her highest good." The principle now widely known as Dyarchy, in accordance with which a provincial government would be divided into two wings responsible, one to the Government of India and the Secretary of State, the other to the provincial electorate, would provide a vessel on which an adventurous voyage could immediately be undertaken. No time should be lost in launching this vessel. The distant haven was a sisterhood of self-governing States presided over by a central Government increasingly responsible to the populations of the whole sub-continent. There would be a place for the Native States in this picture. They must necessarily be affected by the processes at work in British India. But in them progress towards democracy would not be artificially accelerated. The Report added that "the final form of India's constitution must be evolved out of Indian conditions" and must be "materially affected by the need of securing Imperial responsibilities." The dominating factor in the intermediate process would be the rate at which the provinces could move towards responsible government.

The Viceroy and the Secretary of State asked for reasoned criticism of these proposals. In particular they were to be examined by the heads of provinces who had not seen them in their matured form. The examination ended in the condemnation of dyarchy by the large majority of local Governments. Five heads of provinces were in January 1919 invited to make alternative proposals. They recommended a unified form of provincial government with an official majority of a Governor and two Executive Councillors (one an Indian) and a minority of two popular ministers. The ministers would exercise a joint responsibility in all departments and no separate or sole responsibility. The heads of provinces reported: "We are impressed by the misgivings that exist in the services generally, Indian as well as European, as to their position

and prospects under a dual form of government. The scheme exposes a large surface to legislative, administrative and financial friction. It breaks away from all experience and divides government against itself. It has all the elements which make for division at a time when there is most need for co-operation." They remarked that owing to religious, caste, social and other cleavages among the people, the electorate would be very different from the electorates of Western countries. At present it was impossible to predict how it would act.

Such were the views of the Lieutenant-Governors of the United Provinces, the Punjab and Burma, of the Chief Commissioners of the Central Provinces and Assam. The Governor of Bengal and the Lieutenant-Governor of Bihar and Orissa, however, held that the scheme of dyarchy proposed in the Report was more in accordance with the pronouncement of August 20, 1917; it offered less chance of discord than a scheme of unified government; and the latter would further imply a sudden transfer of all power from official to non-official Members of Councils, which would be very dangerous.

The alternative scheme was asked for and formulated in January 1919, and was not given to the public till May 1919, when the Franchise and Functions Committees proposed in the Reforms Report had done their work, and dyarchy had been for many months in sole possession of the field.

Although condemned by the Congress and Muslim League and severely criticised by the European Association, the Montagu-Chelmsford proposals, which were supported by all the members of the Council of the Secretary of State and of the Viceroy's Executive Council, were welcomed by the non-official members of the Imperial Legislative Council. But the great majority of the people were thinking of other things. The monsoon of 1918 was failing. Prices of grain, salt, oil and cloth were rising and causing depression and anxiety. Nothing else mattered to the masses. The District officers too were apprehensive. In addition to their ordinarily heavy duties, they were busily occupied in assisting to obtain recruits for the army and for labour corps as well as in collecting supplies. Their attention was constantly riveted on the battlefields of France and Italy; and only gradually were they cheered by the consciousness that victory was near, and that the prolonged strain was drawing to an end. Great issues were at stake in Europe and Asia; but while the Empire was fighting for its life, certain agitators continued their efforts, breaking new ground in the promotion of labour-unrest in

Southern India. In September 1918 Muhammadan riots occurred in Calcutta. In October and November the country was visited by a terribly severe influenza epidemic which caused 12,500,000 deaths.[1]

On November 1 the Moderates definitely severed themselves from the Congress by holding a separate Conference at Bombay, which was attended by 500 delegates. Admittance was regulated by invitation, as wreckers were feared. But many sympathisers abstained from coming forward from fear of the attacks and abuse of newspapers.

The same month brought news of the Armistice. The long strain of the war came to an end. The Maharaja of Bikanir and Sir Satyendra (now Lord) Sinha were chosen to represent India at the Peace Conference. Before going further, we may well examine the parts played by various provinces and races in the great struggle.

XXIII

INDIA'S WAR-EFFORT

THE primary duties of the pre-war army in India had been first the maintenance of order within and on the borders of British India, and second the provision of a field army capable, should occasion arise, of undertaking a campaign beyond the frontier. The army in India had not been maintained for meeting general Imperial obligations, although it had been on occasions employed in foreign campaigns, which had extended from Egypt in the West to China in the East, and although British regiments from India had saved Natal in 1899. Never before 1914 had units exceeding 18,000 in strength been despatched overseas.

At the outset of the Great War the proportion of British to Indian units was approximately one to two. The former were drafts from the British regular army, were brigaded with Indian units and were paid for by India. The latter were practically a long-service army, recruited on the principle laid down by Lord Roberts that, as only a small force was financially possible, it must be drawn from the martial castes and classes, the best fighting material available. There was no room for a soldier "whose only *raison d'être* is that he acts as a check upon another soldier." The annual demand for recruits averaged about 14,000. In each regiment Indian officers holding commissions from the Viceroy occupied a posi-

[1] Paper by Census Commissioner read before the Society of Arts, February 1923.

tion immediate between the British commissioned officers and the Indian N.C.O.s.

In Chapter XX were shown the heavy demands which were made on the army in India in the first months of war. The total number of British officers sent overseas from India during the whole war-period was 23,070. British other ranks similarly despatched, either as complete units or as reinforcements, numbered 196,000. The total strength of Indian personnel, combatant and non-combatant, despatched to the various forces overseas during the war was 943,372. The casualties suffered by Indian troops were 106,594, of whom 36,696, including 691 Indian officers, were killed or died; 841 British officers of the Indian Army and 212 of the Reserve were killed or died on service.

The old system of recruitment remained in force till 1917, when it practically broke down. Then it was that, under the direction of a Central Recruiting Board, presided over by the late Sir William Meyer, wider recruitment of all kinds was undertaken, and new methods were adopted from the Punjab which sufficiently co-ordinated civil and military recruiting agencies.

In the combatant ranks Punjabi Muslims, Sikhs, Gurkhas and Rajputs were numerous and prominent. Recruitment from races without military traditions met with but limited success.[1]

The provincial figures for recruitment of all kinds were:

Province.	Population in Millions. (Census of 1911.)	Combatant Recruits Enlisted.	Non-combatant Recruits Enlisted.	Total.
Madras	40	51,223	41,117	92,340
Bombay	20	41,272	30,211	71,483
Bengal	45	7,117	51,935	59,052
United Provinces . . .	47	163,578	117,565	281,143
Punjab	20	349,688	97,288	446,976
N.W. Frontier Province . .	3	32,181	13,050	45,231
Baluchistan		1,761	327	2,088
Burma	12	14,094	4,579	18,673
Bihar and Orissa . . .	33	8,576	32,976	41,552
Central Provinces . . .	13	5,376	9,631	15,007
Assam	6	942	14,182	15,124
Ajmer-Merwara . . .	½	7,391	1,632	8,973
Total . . .		683,149	414,493	1,097,692

[1] See Esher Report.

As the above figures show, the military strength of British India lies mainly in the Punjab and United Provinces, the old battleground of India, the country of the Rajputs, the Sikhs, the Gurkhas, and the Muslims from Central Asia who followed the Moghal Emperors.

The Punjab in particular had been the favourite recruiting-field for soldiers since the days of the Mutiny. Half of the Indian Army had been raised in that province. Its rural classes, its landlords, its peasant-proprietors, have rendered services of incalculable value to the Empire; and no story of the Punjab's great war-effort would be complete which did not notice the indefatigable and strenuous appeals of the Lieutenant-Governor, Sir Michael O'Dwyer, as well as the services of those civil and police officers of Government, British and Indian, who in the first critical months of the war, when bloodshed and riot were menacing, met and defeated a conspiracy which, had it achieved a substantial measure of success, would have inevitably deflected the whole course of India's war-history. Their anxieties had not ended with those months. Throughout the war some thousands of emigrants, who had returned to the Punjab with revolutionary ideas, were living in the villages of that province, some under restrictions, but the majority at perfect liberty.

Turning to the United Provinces, we find remarkable figures from an area which for recruiting of combatants had long lain largely fallow; we also find a supply of non-combatant recruits well in excess of the supply from any other province of India.

It must be remembered that for years these provinces, which were the cockpit of the Mutiny and are the heart of India, had been slighted as a recruiting-ground for the combatant ranks. Military traditions had grown faint in many districts. On January 1, 1915, from 17,000 to 18,000 only of the fighting force of India came from the United Provinces. In pre-war days the annual supply was about 1,500 combatant recruits, who were taken from a very limited number of classes. It was in 1917 that, under the direction of the Central Recruiting Board, a great effort was made, and a provincial War Board, under Sir John Campbell, co-ordinated and controlled all war-efforts. The result was that, whereas the total number of combatant recruits during the first half of 1917 was only 12,551, at the time of the Armistice the monthly average had risen to 12,806. Remarkable keenness and organising capacity were shown in recruitment by the caste brotherhoods

of the Rajputs, the Jats and the Ahirs (or herdsmen). The hillmen of all classes responded splendidly to the call of the Government. The two regiments of which the Provinces have particular reason to be proud are the 39th Garhwalis and the 6th Jats, both of which have earned imperishable renown.

In supplying non-combatant recruits, the United Provinces stand first in India. For the Army Bearer Corps, in which there was at one time a most serious shortage, they supplied nearly half the total recruited in all India. Twenty-one independent labour companies came from there, as well as an agricultural corps, for growing maize at Salonika, which was urgently requisitioned in March 1918 and despatched within ten days from Lucknow. A special rock-cutting company was raised for Southern Persia, and another agricultural company was recruited from the hills for employment in Mesopotamia. Between July 1, 1917, and November 1, 1918, the Provinces supplied 76,762 non-combatants against a demand of 45,823. Strenuous exertions were made by the landlords and by the district officers.

To very many the war was a vague idea, yet the spirit that moved some of the humblest is evidenced by a petition of a poor Jat widow in the Aligarh district received by a recruiting officer. In this petition the widow said that her husband had died seventeen and a half years before, leaving one son six months old. When the boy reached the age of sixteen she took him to the recruiting officer, but he was rejected as being too young. Now he had waited two years longer and she could offer him to the British Government to fight for the just cause. " At his departure," ran the petition, " my instructions to my son are that he will be a source of pleasure and profit to me only when he does his best to defeat the cause of the enemy by the sacrifice of his life in the service of the Government. Go, my son, serve the King, and pray for his long life and prosperity, and do your duty." The boy was enrolled in the 35th Sikhs, and the mother's petition should be remembered as long as loyalty and self-sacrifice are honoured among men.

The next province that calls for particular notice is the small but most difficult and important charge of the North-west Frontier Province. Ninety-four per cent. of its population are Muslims of the most fanatical and turbulent type, to whom the participation of Turkey in the war, the military operations of the British in Mesopotamia, Palestine and Arabia, lands held sacred throughout Islam, were religious appeals of

a potent kind. It was believed, even by many who had still then been definitely pro-British, that the Entente Allies had conspired together to compass the final overthrow of Islam. This belief was fanned by Afghan, Turk and German emissaries, who strongly endeavoured to arrange a concerted rising of the fierce and warlike frontier tribes. Throughout the whole period of the war the latter gave trouble, but with no sustained cohesion. The result was that each rising was dealt with as it occurred. Fortunately this most vulnerable portion of the Empire had been for some time in the hands of a notable soldier and administrator, the late Sir George Roos-Keppel, G.C.I.E.; and there can be no doubt that this fact contributed substantially to its escape from any general rebellion.

But its war-record was by no means purely negative. Although again and again officers, British and Indian, were borrowed for Mesopotamia and elsewhere; although many of those who remained broke down; although trans-frontier recruiting came to a standstill; recruiting in the five districts on the British side of the frontier in percentage excelled even the Punjab figure. Contributions, moreover, to the War Loan and war charities were generous for so poor a population. Throughout the war the police of the province rendered excellent service in spite of poor pay; and the whole provincial staff of civil and military officers held the gates of India through those critical years with untiring firmness, courage and resource.

Regarding other provincial figures, it is fair to note that the climates, circumstances, peoples, of the various provinces differ greatly. Indian races with martial traditions are limited in number, belong entirely to the agricultural classes and largely to particular provinces. For this reason provinces should not be judged simply by the statistics given. Until late in the war, recruitment for the combatant ranks was carried on among those races only which possess military traditions.

There can be no doubt that better results than those actually obtained would have followed from wider and more elaborate recruiting efforts earlier in the war. But the domestic situation at first presented certain features of grave peril which must be borne in mind when we review the past. We should also remember that originally in the United Kingdom the watchword "Business as usual" had been given out by high authority, and that the magnitude of the task before the Empire was imperfectly appreciated at its centre. England did not then know what India could provide, and India did not know all that England would need. The great effort

which was set on foot by Lord Chelmsford and Sir Charles Monro, then Commander-in-Chief, and organised with remarkable success by the Central Recruiting Board under the guidance of Sir William Meyer and Sir Havelock Hudson, Adjutant-General, came when England had at last realised how near she was to losing the war.

Before leaving the subject of provincial recruitment, a well-deserved tribute must be paid to the fine services of some Bombay regiments, and more especially to the Konkanasth Marathas, who have learnt from British military officers to fight under modern conditions with a spirit worthy of the ancient renown of Sivaji's soldiers.

Passing to the independent kingdom of Nipal the ancient and tried ally of the British Government, and to the Native States of India, we should note that from the former 58,904 recruits were obtained, and that 115,891 recruits (88,958 combatant and 26,933 non-combatant) were furnished by the latter, the Rajput States alone contributing 59,267. The services of the Ruling Chiefs were of inestimable value.

Thousands of medical, railway and technical personnel were sent overseas. Numbers were raised for labour corps, porter corps, groom companies, supply and transport. The total of all ranks of personnel embarked at Bombay and Karachi was 1,302,394. Of these 296,221 were British and 1,006,173 were Indian.

Horses, ponies, mules, camels, draught bullocks, dairy cattle, sent overseas aggregated 172,815. The burden thrown upon the Royal Indian Marine was enormous. Sea-transport for men, animals, stores and munitions was taken up and fitted out under the supervision of Captain Lumsden and his officers with remarkable expedition. Hospital ships, too, were equipped and despatched to various theatres of war. Boats for river transport in Mesopotamia were fitted out in Bombay and Calcutta.

India is not an industrial country. Labour of the kind required in the production of war material hardly existed outside the ordnance factories, two or three other Government establishments and a few private engineering firms. The munition-making resources of the country were first co-ordinated by the Railway Board, which employed a special staff to supervise and develop output. But when, on March 1, 1917, shortly after Sir Charles Monro's succession to the office of Commander-in-Chief, the Munitions Board was created as a temporary Department of the Government of India and the

services of Sir Thomas Holland were enlisted, marvels were effected in the output of war-material. The Munitions Board took over the organisation of: (*a*) the ordnance factories; (*b*) hides (tanned and raw), and leather exports to the United Kingdom and Italy; (*c*) the supply of railway track, rolling stock and plant; (*d*) the supply of textiles and clothing, of boots, tents and jute goods; (*e*) the supply of water-transport in eastern theatres of war; (*f*) the shipping of timber to Egypt, Mesopotamia, Salonika and other theatres of war; (*g*) the supply of miscellaneous engineering plant and stores.

A few figures will afford some idea of the extent of these activities. Payments on account of hides alone amounted to £6,811,477 up to March 31, 1918, and between April 1, 1918, and October 31, 1918, amounted to £3,447,254. The total value of equipment and supplies sent overseas during the war to the various forces dependent on India was £34,408,000. For Mesopotamia 156 steamers, 271 launches and 531 barges were provided or arranged from India. In addition a small number of craft were despatched to Aden and East Africa.

The cotton-mills of Bombay, the jute-mills of Calcutta, the woollen-mills of Cawnpore, the great Tata Iron and Steel Works Company—the emblem of a remarkable advance of industry in India—all contributed materially toward winning the war. "I can hardly imagine," said Lord Chelmsford, "what we should have done if the Tata Company had not been able to give us steel rails which have provided not only for Mesopotamia, but for Egypt, Palestine and East Africa."

The total net contribution from India's revenues towards the close of the war amounted to £135,800,000 by the close of the year 1918–19; a further sum of £13,800,000 was paid in 1919–20; and sums aggregating about £10,500,000 will be paid in succeeding years in respect of pensionary charges.

The great effort of 1917–18 was loyally seconded by propagandist and patriotic articles in some organs of the press; but as the struggle reached its supreme climax, it became more and more apparent that Government must endeavour to disseminate more accurate news among the people. In the Punjab an official weekly war-journal was published from May 1918 up to the close of the year, in English, Urdu and Gurmukhi (for Sikhs), under the editorship of Mr. Kitchin, Commissioner of Lahore, which did excellent service. During the last three months of the war the sales of the Urdu edition, of which there was no free issue, were never less than 70,000 per week. At one time they totalled 100,000. On July 17, 1918,

an official war journal was issued in the United Provinces under the editorship of the Rev. Dr. Garfield Williams, who was assisted by Pandit Satyanand Joshi, sub-editor of the *Leader*. At first the issues were 41,000, but by December they had risen to 119,500, and had penetrated to remote villages of the provinces.

In England the Civil Service was largely augmented during the war-period. But recruits from home were rarely available to fill vacancies among civil servants in India, caused by illness or deputations to military duty. The last eighteen months of war-time were marked by much political agitation and debate. The fact that, in spite of these circumstances, the highest authorities in India were able to devote prolonged energy to discussing post-war constitutional changes at a time when the West was wrapped in darkness and gloom points unmistakably to the general tranquillity of the country and the never-ceasing toil of the rank and file of the civil administration.

It must, however, be clearly understood that among all the men of our own race who contributed to India's effort in the Great War, the British officer of the Indian Army stands first and foremost. His helmet has reflected few gleams of glory; but it was he who in the long years before 1914 disciplined the ardour and inspired the confidence which moved the officers and men who followed him through many a hard-fought engagement. The officers and soldiers of the old Indian Army have largely vanished from the earth; but the memory of their self-sacrifice challenges Britain to guard the trust for which they gave their all.

XXIV

TRAGEDY

The great struggle was over. But trouble of a new kind was gradually assuming outline.

Shortly after the publication of the Reforms proposals, another report had been published in India, and later in England. It was the work of a committee appointed by the Government of India, in consequence of a representation made by the Government of Bengal, to investigate the nature and extent of criminal conspiracies connected with the revolutionary movement and to suggest legislation whereby difficulties encountered in dealing with such conspiracies might be counteracted. The President of the Committee, which

consisted of five members, two being Indian lawyers, was Mr. Justice Rowlatt of the King's Bench. Their report was published on July 19, 1918. Its conclusions were these:

Plots, which had produced a long series of murders and robberies, had been contrived in various provinces, notably Bengal. The objective of all these plots was the overthrow by force of British rule in India. Sometimes they had been isolated, sometimes they had been inter-connected; in a few cases they had been encouraged and supported by German influence. The conspirators had been, as a rule, young men belonging to the educated middle or political classes. They were few in number, but their propaganda, inspired by perverted idealism, was elaborate, ingenious and widely extended. In Bengal it had produced a long series of crimes; in four other provinces it took no root but led to sporadic crime or disorder. In the Punjab the return, during the closing months of 1914, of emigrants from America bent on anarchy and bloodshed had produced numerous outrages and a very dangerous conspiracy. In Bengal, particularly, the revolutionists had been very busy in schools and colleges; and by bomb-outrages, by secret murders, by assassinations of Indian police officers, by gang-robberies termed "political dacoities," they had established a terrorism which frequently rendered sworn evidence unobtainable and trials in Court abortive. The witnesses of the various crimes were generally timid, ignorant, credulous persons, descendants of the victims of the dacoits of Warren Hastings's days, living in wide tracts of country largely destitute of communications.

An old regulation was on the Statute-book which enabled imprisonment without trial of persons dangerous to the State. But this regulation could never be used without exciting strong animadversion in the Imperial Parliament. Consequently it was employed seldom and with much hesitation. Things grew worse and worse; and it was only in 1915, under the additional pressure of the war, that at last efficacious measures were taken under the Defence of India Act which was to have effect for the duration of the war and for six months after its conclusion. Application of this Act and of the regulations framed thereunder allowed internments in certain cases without trial, and restriction of the movements of dangerous persons. It also provided for speedier trials. The Punjab was soon quieted; and the outrages in Bengal were definitely arrested, but only after the new measure had been thoroughly used.

The Rowlatt Committee were bidden to recommend, if they could, legislation for measures which should, on the expiration of this Act, prevent relapse into the semi-paralysis of the past. They did unanimously propose legislation on lines similar in character to the only effective remedy till then devised, but considerably less severe and far more subject to non-official intervention. They pointed out that the difficulties which had formerly arisen in dealing with revolutionaries sprang from a *reign of terrorism*; that this terrorism had, so far as revolutionary crime was concerned, beaten the ordinary Statute Law and brought it into contempt. At last a remedy had been devised; but former conditions might or might not return when the Defence of India Act lapsed on the conclusion of the war. It was uncertain in what circumstances the war would conclude. As far, however, as the Committee could see, the revolutionary movement had not been so broken that the possibility of revival of the conspiracies could safely be disregarded. On that footing they made their report. They recommended a few amendments in the Statute Law and the investment of the Government with certain powers which would, if need be, enable it to deal with certain emergencies. The powers should be on the Statute-book in advance in order that their effect might be deterrent. To postpone legislation till the danger was imminent was to risk a recurrence of the disastrous hesitations of past years. The powers, however, must be purely *emergency*, and it was for the Government to decide whether they should be taken permanently or only for a period.

The publication of the Report was followed by bitter vituperation in the Extremist press; and before the Government of India had pronounced on its recommendations, a resolution was moved at the September 1918 sessions of the Imperial Legislative Council by Mr. Khaparde, a prominent politician, recommending that consideration of the Report be "held in abeyance." Mr. Khaparde condemned the Report and its proposals, but on division was only supported by one other member. Several non-official Indians spoke, none rejecting the Committee's findings of fact, one condemning its proposals, the rest reserving judgment on the latter, but agreeing that they saw no reason to postpone action on the Report. The Government concluded, with substantial reason, that legislative action should be taken on the recommendations of the Rowlatt Committee without unnecessary delay and would be supported, to a material extent, by sober Indian opinion.

They began to draft two bills which were to cause much commotion. But before these were published came the Armistice; and the time for which the new measures were to be ready was brought nearer than seemed probable in September.

In November 1918 the Franchise and Functions Committees which were to elaborate in detail the principles propounded in the Montagu-Chelmsford Report began work under the presidency of Lord Southborough. They toured throughout the country, their labours concluding in March 1919.

Political excitement, however, which had subsided for a short space after the Armistice, broke out again at the usual December meetings of the Congress and the Muslim League. These took place at Delhi and were marked by fervid oratory. The principle of self-determination must be applied to India. Political prisoners and internees must be released. The Press Act must be repealed. The declaration of August 20, 1917, was cautious and cold. The Montagu-Chelmsford proposals fell far short of the Congress-League scheme. There must be fiscal freedom for India. Full responsible government in the provinces should be granted at once. The proposals of the Sedition Committee, if accepted, "would interfere with the fundamental rights of the Indian people." Resolutions were passed by the Muslim League affirming the desirability of maintaining the control of the Sultan of Turkey over the holy places of Arabia and Mesopotamia, as the true Khalifa. Reference was made in the speech of the President to "the hurling of the hordes of Christendom against the bulwarks which the heroes of Islam had raised for the protection of their faith. It was evident that both Congress and Muslim League had been definitely captured by Extremists.

In January 1919 the Government of India promulgated two Bills which, they announced, would be considered at the February sessions of the Imperial Legislative Council. The Bills embodied with slight variations the proposals of the Rowlatt Committee. The first, and by far the less important, Bill provided for the suggested amendments in the ordinary Statute Law. The second Bill empowered the Government of India to bring into action, *upon emergency*, in any part of the country, by previous notification, specified provisions for the trial of persons prosecuted for anarchical or revolutionary crime or conspiracy, also for the internment, or restriction from travelling, of persons held on substantial grounds to have been guilty of, or to be likely to promote, revolutionary crime. These provisions were to come into force *should emergency arise*,

and after carefully considered proclamation by the Government of India. They were hedged about by elaborate precautions.

Then it was that in an ill-omened hour the Moderates joined the uncompromising opposition of the Extremists. Large meetings were held in various cities; Extremist orators were prominent. The provisions of the Bills were exaggerated and travestied in an absurd manner before audiences mainly consisting of excitable people who neither read nor cared to hear the text of the Report or the Bills. On the other side no one spoke; although there was certainly one section of the people of Bengal which, had it dared to come forward, could have pleaded the cause of the Bills to some purpose, a humble body but not unimpressive to those who knew the history of the past and believed that it was the duty of the Government to protect adequately its loyal servants and innocent subjects. There were the parents of youths decoyed by revolutionary associations to crime and ruin; there were unfortunates plundered of their property; there were widows and children of policemen or schoolmasters murdered for doing their duty faithfully and to the end. Again and again the criminals from whom such people had suffered had escaped, simply because of the uselessness of a Statute Law devised for happier times. Their many victims, could these have spoken, would not have criticised the new measures unfavourably.

The Imperial Legislative Council met at Delhi early in February 1919, and the necessity for the Bills was emphasised by the Viceroy. The Home Member, Sir William Vincent, decided to take the "Emergency" and more important Bill first. After long debates, bitter opposition, and various concessions, it was passed in opposition to the votes of all the non-official Indian members. All through the debates, from February to the end, the Government was constantly menaced with warnings of widespread and serious agitation. But it seemed so evident that to surrender to such threats would be to abandon the future control of India to the most violent and unreasonable section of political opinion that compromise beyond a certain point was deemed impracticable. The attitude of the Government was throughout conciliatory, and the piloting of the Bill in Select Committee and Council by the Home Member was warmly eulogised afterwards by Mr. Montagu in the House of Commons.

Meantime outside the Council opposition to the measure was organising in particular places. The headquarters of the organisation were in the Bombay Presidency, where Mr. Gandhi

had taken up the cause. He had returned from South Africa in 1917, and had already attracted attention by his attitude in certain affairs. His past, his asceticism, his high reputation for sanctity, appealed strongly to Indian sentiment. He now instituted a movement of passive resistance which was to go far and achieve infinite mischief. It was at once condemned by the "Moderate" leaders at Delhi. When acknowledging their manifesto in Council, the Home Member warned the country in impressive terms of the dangers inherent in the new movement. But already, on March 1, the signatories to *Satyagraha* (insistence on truth, alias passive resistance) had formed an association at Bombay and appointed an executive committee. On the next day Mr. Gandhi had issued a manifesto inaugurating "civil disobedience" to the Rowlatt Bill if passed, and to any other laws which might be selected by his association. Before the close of the month speeches of a violent and inflammatory kind had been delivered both in the Bombay Presidency and in Northern India. The bitter hostility that was preached rapidly intensified the effect of a propaganda of years, and, infecting still further the students of some large cities, communicated itself in an unprecedented fashion to the lower orders of those places. The bullies and ruffians among the latter, who are always ready to seize opportunities, were encouraged by rumours that the war had exhausted the British Army. Pro-Turkish Muhammadan sentiment, high prices, resentment of an enhanced income-tax, encouraged a spirit of revolt. Among the credulous in some cities a zealous propaganda inspired the firm belief that a law had been passed by the British which would allow to all persons prosecuted in Court neither lawyer, nor appeal, nor right to call witnesses; that even casual meetings of three or four persons would be forbidden; and that in some mysterious way even the women and children would be made to suffer. The tide of calumny and alarm was fast rising when from Bombay Mr. Gandhi and his committee proclaimed a general *hartal* (closing of shops and suspension of business) for March 30. Subsequently the day was altered to April 6; but on the former day occurred the first of a series of racial riots, deeply disastrous in their nature and results.

The practice of exercising communal pressure on a governor by means of organised hartal was existent in Moghal times, but was resorted to seldom. Under British rule it had almost disappeared, although its revival on a large scale was certainly contemplated by some of the revolutionists of 1907, and in

1908 a learned Hindu, who lived apart from politics, expressed his conviction that future wars would be decided "not so much by soldiers as by passive resistance—boycotts and strikes, industrial and economic methods."[1] Mr. Gandhi resolved to apply these methods at once to a situation which had been diligently worked up for their reception.

The Imperial Legislative Council had dissolved and the heads of the Government of India had left the capital when, on the morning of March 30, the shops of Delhi were closed as a protest against the passage of the Sedition Bill. Some shopkeepers who opened were induced to close again; and about 1.30 p.m. members of a crowd entered the railway-station and endeavoured to prevent the contractor who was supplying food to third-class passengers from carrying out his duties. He was bidden to recognise the hartal, and on refusing was assaulted. Two of his assailants were arrested; the mob entered the station to rescue them, but were driven back by the police and some troops. Eventually the latter were compelled to fire; eight persons were killed, and a larger number were wounded.

On March 31 large processions attended the funeral services of those who had been killed, but no collision between the crowds and the police occurred. On April 1 shops began to open again; but on April 6 there was a second hartal. A large meeting was held in a mosque, where, contrary to Muhammadan custom, Hindus were allowed to speak. On April 7, 8 and 9, shops gradually reopened. On the evening of the last of these dates Mr. Gandhi, who was on his way from Bombay to Delhi, was stopped by order of Government and turned back to his own province of Bombay, where he was directed to stay. On April 14 and 17 further minor disturbances occurred at Delhi.

The tale of the racial riots which marked this disastrous April, of arson, plunder and murder, of the preventive and retributory measures which these crimes produced, has been told in the Report of the Committee of enquiry presided over by Lord Hunter, senator of the Scotch College of Justice, and in the volumes of evidence published therewith. The broad facts must be briefly stated. The most violent outbreaks occurred in Guzerat, Mr. Gandhi's native province, where an Indian magistrate was deliberately burnt to death for trying to do his duty, and in the Punjab, where great efforts were made to persuade the people that they were the victims of

[1] Gobinda Das, *Hinduism and India*, p. 253.

gross oppression. The storm-centre in this province was Amritsar, a city of peculiar geographical, commercial and political importance. There on April 10 the deportation of two prominent agitators was followed by savage riots, by attempts to sever communications, by fire and plunder, by brutal murders of four Europeans and attacks on others of both sexes, and by the hurried removal of British women and children to the fort. Further murders of two British warrant officers on the 11th at Kasur, a neighbouring town, the cutting of all telegraph wires between Amritsar and Lahore on the 12th, the hostile attitude of the Amritsar population, and alarming news from the surrounding country led to a terrible act of retribution. On the afternoon of the 13th a dense gathering of thousands of men convened in defiance of proclamations in a wide enclosure named the Jallianwala Bagh, and listening to a harangue, was dispersed by the rifle-fire of a small Indian infantry force, delivered without immediate warning, under the orders of Brigadier-General R. E. Dyer. About 379 persons were killed and a far larger number were wounded, as fire was directed for about ten minutes on masses of persons endeavouring to escape through 'few and imperfect exits' from the scene of slaughter. General Dyer did not attempt to see that steps were taken to succour the wounded, for whom, as he expressed it, the hospitals were open. When all was over he marched his men back to their quarters. It appears that all through those terrible minutes his mind was filled to overflowing with three considerations, the futility of all previous measures, the continuous attempts to isolate his force, the certainty that if it were swept away massacre and destruction would reign unchecked far and wide. He believed that the safety of the province was at stake; and in the glare and excitement of the hour seems hardly to have appreciated the fact that for the crowds in front of him the Jallianwala Bagh was largely a *cul-de-sac*. We must deeply regret that the thoughts which possessed him left no room for cooler observation or for the natural compassion which must otherwise have interposed. But there can be no doubt that he was confronted by a terrible and highly critical emergency and by a wide impression that the arm of the Government was paralysed.[1] On April 15 martial law was declared at Lahore and Amritsar. It was soon

[1] The District Magistrate informed the Hunter Committee that the effect of General Dyer's action "was electric. The news ended all danger of further disturbance in the district. It was taken far and wide as an assurance that the hand of Government was not, as it was thought, paralysed; and all who were waiting on events hastened to declare for constituted authority."

afterwards extended to other districts and was marked by some incidents which later on met with severe censure from His Majesty's Government as humiliating to Indian sentiment. Martial law was clearly unavoidable. From April 10 to 22, railways and telegraph wires were subjected to repeated and organised attacks. No less than fifty-four outrages were reported by the Director of Telegraphs concerned. The railway staff was tampered with by agitators, with the result that in the centre of the province, the railway, as a commercial system, was practically paralysed between April 10 and 21. Derailment was resorted to, and for a time passenger traffic was seriously impeded.

Outside the Punjab and the Guzerat area of the Bombay Presidency the Rowlatt Bill agitation evaporated in meetings of protest. In Calcutta there were riots which resulted in loss of life and injury to police officials; but there all was speedily over, and no disturbance occurred elsewhere in Bengal, the main source of the revolutionary movement, and the origin of the anti-sedition legislation. Three hundred of the landlords of that province addressed a remarkable circular letter to their tenants, pointing out that the Rowlatt Act had been passed "more for the benefit of the people than for the benefit of the Government," and reprobating "the disorderly and lawless state of certain parts of India, due to a deliberate campaign of falsehood and downright misrepresentation which has been and continues to be systematically carried on by the enemies of Government concerning the scope, character and object of the Rowlatt Act, combined with the sinister activities, as is suspected, of a secret gang of agitators aiming at revolution and working beneath the surface."

Mr. Gandhi was at first shocked by the fruits of his activities. He assisted in restoring order at Ahmedabad and regretted that when he embarked upon a mass movement he "had underrated the forces of evil." He was, he said, convinced that Satyagraha had nothing to do with the violence of the mob. Nevertheless he advised his followers to suspend civil disobedience for a time, and to assist in the restoration of order. In his opinion "there were clever men behind the lawless deeds, and they showed concerted action." But his repentance was short-lived. A month later he contemplated resumption of civil disobedience in July.

It should be noted that during the period of the riots, when in the Punjab the whole authority and existence of the Government were violently challenged, its active adherents were

the Chiefs, the Indian Army and the Police. A prominent Punjabi landlord in a courageous letter to the press exposed the nature of the passive resistance movements and the methods employed to promote it.[1] There were also many Indians "who in the face of frenzied mobs, and even at the risk of their lives, afforded assistance or showed compassion to the innocent victims of the outrages." [2]

With all the wisdom born of after-events it is natural to condemn the Rowlatt legislation. Yet there can be no doubt that, in the words of the Home Member, the central Government acted "from a deep-rooted conviction that they were right." When they undertook the legislation they believed that they might count on substantial Moderate support. Disaster resulted when this failed them altogether, and when, under a leader possessed of unique powers of appeal, racial propaganda of the bitterest and most unscrupulous description was addressed to urban populations weary of difficult times, suffering from high prices and the effects of a devastating epidemic, who had long been invited to ascribe all evils to British rule and were now persuaded that it might be overthrown.

XXV

THE END OF THE OLD ORDER

HABIB-ULLA, the strong and capable Amir of Afghanistan, the loyal ally of the British Government, had been murdered on February 20, 1919, and after a brief turbid interregnum had been succeeded by his son Aman-Ulla, the present Amir. Russia was by this time dominated by militant anarchy; and the leprosy of Bolshevism was spreading in Central Asia. When "passive resistance" in India had culminated in violent riots, Afghan agents in British territory represented to their master that should his troops cross the frontier, a general rebellion would follow. On April 25 the Afghan army was moving; a stream of anti-British propaganda was flowing from Kabul, and endeavours were being made to raise the frontier tribes. In May the Afghans attacked, and an Afghan agent who was endeavouring to start insurrection in Peshawar was deported. The Amir had issued a proclamation demanding the repeal of tyrannical laws which, he asserted, had been imposed on India.

As soon as hostilities began, it was found that the covering

[1] Lovett, *Indian Nationalist Movement*, p. 211.
[2] Resolution (Government of India), May 3, 1920.

force of militia and irregular troops, recruited from the frontier tribes, had become so seriously affected by fanatical Muslim propaganda as to be quite unreliable. Many of the men deserted to the enemy with their arms. It was necessary, with insufficient preparation, to hurry up troops from an army which had suffered the intense and prolonged strain of the Great War and of very heavy losses of officers. The way to the battlefield lay through the Central Punjab, so lately seething with revolt. But the situation was boldly faced. The area of domestic danger had been placed under martial law; and as soon as serious fighting commenced, considerable assistance was derived from aeroplanes, wireless telegraphy and high explosives. Enemy concentrations, and military objectives in important places such as Jelalabad and Kabul, were bombed; strong forces were mobilised on the frontier. In the north the Afghans were speedily defeated. Farther south operations lasted longer; but by June 2, before the frontier tribes had responded in any considerable measure to the temptations of the hour, the Afghans were beaten.

Hostilities ceased; and a treaty of peace, negotiated by Sir Hamilton Grant, Foreign Secretary, on the part of the Government of India, was signed at Rawalpindi on August 8, 1919. The British Government withdrew the privilege enjoyed by former Amirs of importing arms, ammunition or warlike munitions through India to Afghanistan. They confiscated the arrears of the late Amir's subsidy and granted no subsidy to his successor. They declared that, nevertheless, they desired the re-establishment of the old friendly relations under proper guarantees, and would, after six months, receive another Afghan mission with a view to negotiations for such re-establishment.

The Afghan Government accepted the former Indo-Afghan frontier, agreeing to demarcation of a certain undemarcated portion and to the acceptance of such boundary as a British Commission might lay down. At the same time they received a letter which officially recognised the freedom of Afghan foreign relations from British control and was, therefore, claimed by the Amir as a valuable concession. The British Government, however, explained that the changes brought about in the Middle East by the war had made it difficult to advise Afghanistan regarding foreign affairs.

Order had been gradually restored in the Punjab. But the war necessitated extra precautions, especially in the railway-areas through which troops and munitions were constantly

passing. Incidents of martial law, and punishments inflicted by the officers who administered it, were intensely resented by the political classes; but when, in May 1919, Sir Michael O'Dwyer was succeeded by Sir Edward Maclagan, newspapers were timid and the Punjab was quiet. Martial law was relaxed in certain areas on May 20 and was entirely abrogated, except in regard to railway land, on June 11. A conciliatory policy was initiated by reducing sentences passed on convicted rioters.[1]

It would have accorded with precedent if the Government of Lord Chelmsford, on the repression of the April riots, had called on the local governments concerned to submit full and detailed reports for the information of the Secretary of State and of Parliament, supplementing those reports with their own views and orders adopted after any further investigation that seemed desirable. By such means the whole truth regarding the events of that melancholy April could have been ascertained and published at a time when the sense of a common danger was still impressive in India, when the atmosphere in which those events had occurred could have been understood, before long waiting and bitter recriminations had deepened the colourings which quickly overspread men's minds in racial connections. If moreover there is one country where delay in enquiry complicates situations and increases difficulties, where slander and rumour grow apace, that country is India. But on this occasion the Central Government did not concern themselves to sift the facts, at first because they were encumbered by the toil and anxiety imposed by the Afghan War and the possibility of a renewal of the riots, and afterwards because, in consultation with the Secretary of State, they decided to commit this task to a bi-racial committee which would begin sitting in the following October, six months after the conclusion of the riots.

The field of enquiry, so long neglected on one side, was busily worked by the other. In July a committee of the Congress started work in the Punjab, traversed the whole area of the recent disorders and held an investigation of its own. The newspapers—especially in other provinces—expatiated violently on Punjab grievances; and in September agitation culminated in a warm debate in the Imperial Legislative Council on a

[1] Numbers of the rioters had been arrested and tried; but the records of the Punjab trials by special tribunals were not examined by the Hunter Committee, for while this body was sitting the competence of the tribunals was under appeal before the Privy Council. The convicts, who numbered 1,781, were mostly townsmen.

Bill which was introduced to indemnify from legal, but not from departmental, penalties action taken in good faith by the officers who had suppressed the riots. The Bill was strenuously opposed by a prominent Hindu politician, but became law.

During the closing months of 1919 Muslim agitation, encouraged by failure on the part of the Allies to arrange peace-terms with Turkey, was strengthened under the patronage of Mr. Gandhi, who was busy, with others, in preparing a Congress report on the riots and the repressive measures adopted by the Punjab Government. The Hunter Committee began to sit at Delhi on October 29. They heard the evidence of witnesses for 8 days at Delhi, for 29 days at Lahore, for 6 days at Ahmedabad, for 3 days at Bombay. All the witnesses, with exception of three high officials and one non-official, testified in public. The sittings were naturally accompanied by increasing racial tension which reached a climax with the examination of General Dyer. Simultaneously in England the Reforms proposals were before the Imperial Parliament.

In the summer of 1919 the Government of India Bill, prepared by the Secretary of State in accordance with the proposals contained in the Montagu-Chelmsford Report, had been carefully considered by a Joint Committee of Lords and Commons sitting in London under the chairmanship of Lord Selborne. This Committee had studied carefully all the voluminous literature which had accumulated in connection with the Reforms, as well as the reports of the Franchise and Functions Committees appointed in pursuance of the Montagu-Chelmsford proposals. They had examined representatives of deputations from Indian political bodies, some English-speaking Indians, and some British officials and non-officials. They had accepted dyarchy for the provinces, considering that this system would best secure the objects of the Declaration of 1917. It would fix responsibility, but would enable each side of a provincial Government to assist the other. Joint Cabinet discussion should take place as often as possible. The Committee made various recommendations designed to amplify and simplify the proposed Reforms. The most important of these were:

(*a*) In the Government of India there should be no dyarchy, but three members of the Viceroy's Executive Council should be public servants or ex-public servants, and not less than three should be Indians. No restriction should in future be placed on the total number of members of this Council.

This was a far-reaching change. It resulted in the very early appointment of three Indian lawyers to an Executive Council of eight, of whom two were the Viceroy and the Commander-in-Chief.

(*b*) The Council of State should be a true second chamber. Both this Council and the Legislative Assembly would have special direct electorates. For four years each body would have an appointed Chairman; and after that period would elect its own Chairman.

(*c*) The annual Indian budget should be submitted to the vote of the Legislative Assembly; but certain charges of a special or recurring nature, e.g. the cost of defences, the debt charges and certain fixed salaries, would be exempted from the process of being voted. They could not be discussed by either Chamber unless the Governor-General permitted such discussion.

The budget allotments as voted by the Legislative Assembly would be submitted to the Governor-General-in-Council, who, if he thought fit, could act as if any demand originally made in the budget statement had been assented to, notwithstanding the withholding of such assent or the reduction of the amount demanded. The Governor-General, too, could direct that Bills rejected by the Legislature should become law, if certified as essential for the "safety, tranquillity or interests of British India." But any Bill so enacted must be laid before the Imperial Parliament before it could receive His Majesty's assent.

(*d*) As regards the franchise generally, arrangements were made for certain constituencies based on racial distinctions, such as Muhammadan, Sikh, Maratha, European. There would also be constituencies designed to represent special interests such as landholders, Universities, planters or commerce.

(*e*) A High Commissioner should be appointed for India who would perform functions of agency in London analogous to those performed by the High Commissioners of the Dominions.

(*f*) The Parliamentary Committee eulogised the public services of the Crown in India, declaring that they had "deserved the admiration and gratitude of the whole Empire." Precautions should be taken to secure to members thereof "the career in life to which they had looked forward when they were recruited." If any officers felt that they could not usefully take part in the new régime, they should be offered an equivalent career elsewhere, if this offer could be made, and if not, should

be allowed to retire on such pension as the Secretary of State in Council might consider suitable to their length of service.

(g) The Committee considered that no further constitutional changes should be made for ten years, and then only on the advice of a Commission appointed by Parliament in accordance with the Montagu-Chelmsford proposals. In the interval no changes of substance should be made either in the franchise or in the lists of reserved and transferred subjects.

(*h*) The Committee considered that liberty should be granted to the Government of India to devise those tariff arrangements which seemed best fitted to India's needs as an integral portion of the British Empire. It could not be granted by statute without limiting the ultimate power of Parliament to control the administration of India, and without limiting the Crown's power of veto. But India should have the same liberty to consider the interest of her consumers and manufacturers as Great Britain, Australia, Canada and South Africa. When therefore the Government of India and her Legislature were in agreement in this connection, the Secretary of State should, as far as possible, avoid interference. Interference should be limited to safeguarding the international obligations of the Empire or fixed arrangements within the Empire to which His Majesty's Government was a party.

The Bill, modified in accordance with all the above recommendations, passed through both Houses of Parliament in December 1919. It had owed much to Mr. Montagu's advocacy. He gladly acknowledged "the most responsible and at the same time the proudest moment" of his life. He thought that the passage of the Bill entailed the end of the old era. The "sores of the past" must be forgotten, and a fresh start must be made.

In the Lords the Bill was introduced by Lord Sinha, an ex-President of the Indian National Congress, who had some time before been appointed Under-Secretary of State. "This Bill," he said, "will not, and is not intended to, set up a final and permanent constitution for India. It provides for a period of transition. How long that period will last I make no effort to forecast, but while it lasts, we have to provide a bridge whereby India may pass from an autocratic and bureaucratic form of government, which guides her destinies *ab extra*, to a form of government whereby she will control her own destinies. We have to give the people of India at once some measure of control over the policy which dictates their laws and imposes their taxes; and this we have to do by a system

which will enable a sure judgment to be passed on the use or misuse to which that control is put, and an orderly and justifiable advance to be made."

The Bill received the Royal assent on December 23, 1919, and on the same day His Majesty was pleased to issue a proclamation to India which pointed out the needs of perseverance and mutual forbearance between all sections and races of His Majesty's people on the difficult path to responsible Government which had now been definitely marked out. His Majesty expressed an earnest desire that so far as possible any trace of bitterness between his people and those who were responsible for his Government should be obliterated; and in fulfilment of this desire an amnesty was granted to political prisoners and to persons who had been convicted of offences against the State or subjected to restrictions of liberty under any special or emergency legislation. The proclamation announced the establishment of a Chamber of Princes and the forthcoming visit to India of H.R.H. the Prince of Wales. "With all my people," the proclamation concluded, "I pray to Almighty God that by His wisdom and under His guidance, India may be led to greater prosperity and contentment, and may grow to the fullness of political freedom."

The result of the Act and of the rules subsequently passed thereunder was to give the vote to 6,274,015 of the adult male population. The previous electorates had totalled a few thousands. The rules were not completed and sanctioned by Parliament until the year 1920 had far advanced.

His Majesty's proclamation was well received in India generally; and very full effect was given to the policy laid down by the amnesty, hundreds of the April rioters being released from jail long before the expiration of their sentences. The Congress and Muslim League met at Amritsar on December 27, and some notorious released prisoners were hailed with loud acclamations. Inflammatory speeches were delivered; pilgrimages were made to the Jallianwala Bagh, and the whole sessions of both political bodies proceeded on lines indicating bitter hostility to the Government. The Moderates, however, held a conference in Calcutta to celebrate the passage of the Reforms; and when the Imperial Legislative Council met at Delhi in January 1920, a resolution moved by a Moderate member, Mr. Sinha, was carried unanimously, expressing loyal devotion to His Majesty the King-Emperor, profound gratitude for the Royal proclamation, and confidence in the future of the reforms. The British representatives of the Calcutta and

Bombay Chambers of Commerce pledged themselves to make the new measure a "real success."

Meantime Mr. Gandhi had united with certain other Hindus and with some Muslims in a "Khilafat Conference" which as the year went on raised considerable funds. In January a deputation from this body represented to the Viceroy the necessity for the preservation of the Turkish Empire, stating that the continued existence of the Sultan's Khilafat "as a temporal, no less than a spiritual, institution was the very essence of their faith." Lord Chelmsford's reply was very sympathetic; but in March Mr. Gandhi proclaimed his hope that the Hindus would realise that the Khilafat question overshadowed "the reforms and everything else." His manifesto concluded by recommending non-co-operation with Government. As a last resort the soldiers of the Indian Army would be advised to refuse to serve.

The Khilafat Conference despatched a deputation to England, which was received by the Prime Minister on March 17. But Mr. Lloyd George's reply to their representations was denounced as unsatisfactory; and when protracted negotiations between the Allies and Turkey ended in the publication of the peace-terms of May 1920, the Khilafat Conference refused to be consoled by the Government of India, declining to believe that the conditions announced had not been influenced by religious considerations. Their anger was voiced by Mr. Gandhi, supported by two Muslim brothers, Shaukat Ali and Muhammad Ali, who had been in 1915 interned by Lord Hardinge's Government at Chindwara in the Central Provinces, as an essential measure of precaution at a most critical time. In June 1919 they had been committed to jail for urging on Indian Muslims the desirability of assisting the Afghans in pending hostilities, but had been released in the following December, when they made haste to show that their spirit was unchanged. Muhammad Ali had taken a leading part in the Khilafat deputation which had gone to England and been received by the Prime Minister. Both brothers now, together with Mr. Gandhi, vigorously denounced the Turkish peace-terms. The political barometer was falling fast, when, on May 26, 1920, the Report of the Hunter Committee was published in India and England, together with the covering despatch of the Government of India and the orders of His Majesty's Government conveyed by the Secretary of State for India.[1]

[1] See *India in* 1920, pp. 212–47.

The acute effect of these publications on racial tension was enhanced by the circulation of the report of the Congress Committee of Enquiry, which contained many wild allegations against servants of the Government who had borne the heat and burden of a bitter and painful day. Reports of the vigorous debates which took place in the Imperial Parliament on the subject of Amritsar and the treatment of General Dyer[1] added fuel to the flame of a burning controversy. During the remaining months of the year Mr. Gandhi, his associates, and their agents stumped the country preaching "non-violent non-co-operation." Agitators too visited Muhammadan cultivators in the North-west Frontier Province and in Sind, persuading many to sell their holdings and their goods, leave India, which was no longer a place for devout Muhammadans, and flee over the mountains into Afghanistan. About 18,000 obeyed the preachers, omitting to notice that those worthies did not propose to accompany them to the land of promise; and selling their lands and goods they wandered away with their families. Thousands returned, robbed, destitute, disillusioned; but very many died far from home. Those who came back found themselves homeless, with their property in the hands of those to whom they had sold it for a trifle. The Government did all that was possible to mitigate their sufferings; and the Khilafat agitators turned their attention to fresh fields of activity. A British district officer of high character was murdered by three of their disciples.

The unprecedented licence afforded to Mr. Gandhi and his coadjutors as they stumped the country sowing broadcast the seeds of hatred and revolt excited amazement. In November the Government, who were embarrassed by circumstances including Amritsar, declared their policy, which in action amounted to a decision to take at face-value the plea that the Khilafat-cum-non-co-operation movement, with its elaborate inculcation of race-hatred, enjoined abstention from violence. Repression was incompatible with the spirit of the times and with the dawn of a genuine parliamentary system. The remedial properties inherent in the reforms, organised exertions on the part of "sober-minded and moderate men," must be relied on to hold the pass and combat the dangers of the situation. Only in the last resort would the Government interpose, when indeed failure to take action "would be a criminal betrayal of the people."[2]

[1] General Dyer had been retired from the Army.
[2] Government Resolution, November 1920

"Sober-minded and moderate men" here and there acted in a firm and courageous spirit. The assaults of the non-co-operative party on schools and colleges, its boycott of the Council elections, attained very limited success. But fertile in expedients, and armed with money, Mr. Gandhi and his associates endeavoured to mould to their purposes the illiterate and impressionable masses. At the December political meetings the Congress creed was altered in such a fashion as to eliminate professed adherence of that body to the British connection, and a resolution was passed instituting village committees which would preach racial hatred and boycott of the British far and wide. Paid agents were employed; subscriptions were collected for a "swaraj" fund in memory of Bal Gangadhar Tilak, who had died in the previous August.

The Moderates, on the other hand, formed a "National Liberal Federation" and held a conference at Madras.

The year had been marked by bad harvests, high prices and many strikes. Abroad Mustafa Kemal at Angora was rallying Muslim sentiment to resist the Treaty of Sèvres. From Tashkent the Bolsheviks, who had occupied Bukhara, were conducting an energetic campaign of propaganda. Persia had declined to ratify the Anglo-Persian agreement; Afghanistan was wavering; but in October the Amir invited the despatch of a British mission to Kabul.

The frontier was much disturbed. An expedition against the Mahsuds had lasted from December 1919 to May 7, 1920. The tribesmen were found to be well armed with modern rifles and were seasoned by soldiers who had learnt much from the Great War. A very stubborn action had been fought on January 14, when 9 British officers had been killed and 6 wounded, whilst 10 Indian officers and 365 Indian other ranks had been killed or wounded. The expedition had eventually been brought to a successful conclusion. But it had not stood alone. The Wana Waziris had carried out many raids in Indian territory, robbing and murdering peaceful villagers. A column was despatched against them, and a central position in Waziristan was occupied and maintained. The North-west Frontier Province was seriously affected by the ferment among the tribes and by the reaction of conditions in India.

Non-co-operators spared no pains to procure a general boycott of the elections for the Reformed Councils, resorting freely to intimidation. In some places they attained con-

siderable success, but on the whole they failed. The all-India proportions of voting were:

(*a*) for the Provincial Councils, 20 to 30 per cent.;
(*b*) for the Legislative Assembly, roughly 20 per cent.;
(*c*) for the Council of State, 40 per cent.[1]

On December 31 the old order passed away. Like all human institutions, it had its defects. But its merits were attested in that time of supreme need when India, her Government and her various races, were faced with four years of the most terrible and widespread war ever fought upon this earth.

XXVI

THE NEW ORDER

On January 9, 1921, it was announced at Delhi that Lord Chelmsford would be succeeded by Lord Reading, Lord Chief Justice of England. The appointment was generally welcomed. Lord Reading had, as Attorney-General, been a member of the Cabinet. He had been charged with a financial mission to the United States at a critical period of the war, and later on had held the position of High Commissioner and Special Ambassador at Washington.

On January 10 H.R.H. Arthur Duke of Connaught landed at Madras with his suite. He was to inaugurate the new order. Many years before he had served in India, first as a General officer and then as Commander-in-Chief of the Bombay Army and member of the Bombay Governing Council. Later on, together with H.R.H. the late Duchess of Connaught, he had attended the Coronation Durbar of 1903. Everywhere he had earned warm esteem and regard from all races and classes.

On January 12 His Royal Highness opened the new Madras Legislative Council, on the 31st the Bengal Legislative Council, on February 8 the Chamber of Princes at Delhi, on the following day the Council of State and the Imperial Legislative Assembly, and at the end of February the Bombay Legislative Council. He sailed from India on February 28. Throughout his visit he had been dogged by the surly obstruction of the non-co-operators; but by his earnest words and by his personal influence he had done much to secure a propitious beginning for the new era. He had also given a far-shining example of the unselfish devotion to duty which characterises his House.

[1] See *India in* 1920, p. 66.

At Delhi, on February 9, His Royal Highness had read a message from His Majesty the King-Emperor, conveying congratulations to the Assemblies present and to all the new Provincial Councils. After reading the message he congratulated the Viceroy on the transition into life and reality of the scheme of political progress of which His Excellency and the Secretary of State were the authors. He finished with a personal appeal spoken with an evident emotion which communicated itself at once to his audience with visible effect. "May I claim your patience and forbearance while I say a few words of a personal nature? Since I landed I have felt around me bitterness and estrangement between those who have been and should be friends. The shadow of Amritsar has lengthened over the fair face of India. I know how deep is the concern felt by His Majesty the King-Emperor at the terrible chapter of events in the Punjab. No one can deplore those events more intensely than I do myself. I have reached a time of life when I most desire to heal wounds and to reunite those who have been disunited. In what must be, I fear, my last visit to the India I love so well, here in the new capital inaugurating a new constitution, I am moved to make you a personal appeal put in the simple words that come from my heart, not to be coldly and critically interpreted. My experience tells me that misunderstandings usually mean mistakes on either side. As an old friend of India, I appeal to you all, British and Indians, to bury, along with the dead past, the mistakes and misunderstandings of the past, to forgive where you have to forgive, and to join hands and to work together to realise the hopes that arise from to-day."

The Duke's visit encouraged assertion of loyal and responsible opinion. The Ruling Chiefs once more expressed their devotion to the Throne. The new Councils began work in peace and harmony. But away from the council-chambers, among the masses, among the youth of the educated classes, the sowers of racial hatred were scattering their seeds far and wide, suiting their appeals to the temper of each audience. Muhammadans were told to expect a restoration of Muhammadan rule brought about through Afghan or Turkish assistance. Sikhs were encouraged to anticipate the return of a Sikh kingdom. Factory and railway hands were incited to demand impossible wages. Landless labourers were promised land, cattle and the abolition of caste. Tenants were told that when English rule went, no rent would be payable. All were taught that the only obstacle to the attainment of Swaraj

and a resultant millennium was the presence in India of a few Englishmen and the English army. Although the employment of force was rarely advocated, in deference to Mr. Gandhi's avowed policy of non-violence, all harangues were charged with the same spirit of bitter hostility and necessarily bore bitter fruit.

In Oudh, where agrarian legislation had been for some time delayed by the war and was overdue, non-co-operators vigorously exploited the grievances of the tenants. In January 1921 a large portion of the province was in uproar. One-third of a district was reduced to anarchy by the belief that the British Raj had ceased to exist.

In the same month there was a bloody affray in the Punjab; while in Assam inflammatory appeals to ignorant tea-garden labourers led to riot and disorder. As the campaign developed in various provinces, mobs of ruffians, with the name of Gandhi upon their lips, carried intimidation and terrorism far and wide, while Khilafat orators kindled the flame of religious frenzy. During the year 1921 there were sixty outbreaks of varying gravity in different provinces. Murder, riot and arson resulted. Crime generally increased. The climax came in the slaughter, rapine, foul outrages on Hindu women and forced conversions of Hindus to Islam which marked the Moplah rebellion.

In March 1921 Mr. Gandhi, apparently in answer to critics of his destructive activities, proposed to concentrate for three months upon collecting subscriptions, upon removing the curse of untouchability from the depressed classes and upon inducing every Indian home to employ the hand spinning-wheel. The Indian nation by spinning its own thread and wearing its own cloth would throw off the curse of modern commercialism, and achieve Swaraj. In June the prophet decreed a vigorous boycott of imported cloth and its destruction by fire. Indian mill-shares soared; and in July the Tilak Swaraj Memorial Fund had risen to a very large sum.[1] The Khilafat Fund was also considerable. Mr. Gandhi proclaimed in *Young India* that he could see the time coming when he must refuse obedience to every State-made law, even though bloodshed might certainly follow. The public

[1] The Government had incurred the resentment of many members of the commercial classes through the failure of the Secretary of State to stabilise the rupee at the recently declared ratio of 10 Rs. to the sovereign. In reliance on the declaration large orders had been placed in England for goods of which delivery proved extremely unacceptable owing to a very rapid fall in exchange and in market prices. See Chirol, *India Old and New*, pp. 264–7.

orations of his Muslim associates, the Ali brothers, after some futile negotiations, became more truculent than ever. Emissaries of revolt grew far more numerous, and, through their constant harangues, "racial feeling increased to such a degree that the position of British officers in the various services became in certain localities almost unbearable." [1] In September Mr. Gandhi announced that both the Congress and himself had for some time been tampering with the loyalty of the sepoy and would spread disaffection until they were arrested. In October the Ali brothers were brought to justice and sentenced to two years' rigorous imprisonment. Meantime a dangerous movement had developed in the Punjab, where agitators had been operating for some time and the Sikhs were both dissatisfied with their proportion of elected seats on the Provincial Legislative Council and disposed to think that the reforms and the policy of the Government toward non-co-operation meant the break-up of an empire.

In October 1920 a large Sikh meeting at Lahore was addressed by Mr. Gandhi and his principal lieutenants. Leaders of the riots of 1919 and released revolutionary convicts of 1915 attended. Strong appeals were made to the military, religious and political traditions of the audience, which, remembering that the original Sikh kingdom had arisen from the ruins of Moghal dominion, declared for non-co-operation. Political agitation blended with religious unrest. Hindu practices had developed in various Sikh shrines, the Mahants or abbots of which held command of large funds. Accusing these Mahants of malversation and of tampering with the purity of the Sikh religion, a newly constituted Shrines Committee of non-co-operative tendencies claimed control over all shrines. They were opposed by conservative Sikhs; but bands of their followers wearing a costume resembling that worn by the fanatical Akalis, who fought in the forefront of Ranjit Singh's battles, began to seize shrines forcibly; and Mahants applying to the Government for assistance were referred to the law-courts.

At Nankana, one of the richest shrines in the province, lived a wealthy Mahant of an indifferent reputation and a stubborn character. Fearing a violent attack and unable to obtain a police-guard, he arranged a defence on the pattern of pre-British days, employing armed guards of his own, who allowed a band of 130 reformers to enter the shrine enclosure on February 20, 1921, and then massacred them all. The Mahant was at once arrested; but crowds of infuriated Sikhs flocked

[1] *India in* 1921–2, p. 84.

to Nankana and terrorised the countryside. Military assistance was employed, and further bloodshed was avoided. But more shrines were seized by the new Akalis ; and a Bill introduced by the Government into the Provincial Legislature was withdrawn, as it failed to satisfy either conservative or advanced Sikhs.

In May 1921 a gang of Sikhs armed with stolen revolvers was arrested. In the following September the Shrines Committee endeavoured to organise their bands of Akalis into an army. Prices were very high after two years of poor harvests and there was much economic discontent. Large reductions in the Army had filled villages with returned soldiers.

Altogether the position was highly critical. For long it was difficult for the Government to avoid the appearance of interference in a religious dispute ; and in January 1922, after the release of some Sikh agitators, the numbers of the Akalis rapidly increased. They began to terrorise villages, to march about in bands, to travel in trains without payment, to start village courts which inflicted barbarous punishments, to proclaim the overthrow of the Government and the coming restoration of Sikh rule. At any sign of opposition they concentrated for action, and in some districts overawed the police. In March 1922 they were attacked by the Government police and military forces. Within a month about 1,000 Akalis were arrested and brought to justice, and for a time peace was restored. But in September riots between Hindus and Muslims at Multan would have produced most serious results but for the exertions and level-headed impartiality of the British district officer ; and later on the Akalis again challenged the patience of the Government. They had been encouraged by extensive Congress propaganda in towns and villages and by assertions in newspapers that their operations were part of a "non-violent" and therefore permissible campaign. Latterly a Babar Akali association has been murdering loyal Indians in cold blood.

The neighbouring United Provinces were in 1921 visited by a "great wave of criminal agitation with free incitements to revolution, massacre and assassination."[1] Grave outbreaks occurred and the situation degenerated until vigorous action was taken. Finding, moreover, that non-co-operation among the masses was assuming a Bolshevist[2] complexion, the Government of these provinces organised *Aman Sabhas*

[1] Speech of Sir Harcourt Butler, Governor United Provinces, Lucknow, October 24, 1921.

[2] Bolshevist literature has been constantly entering India.

(anti-revolutionary leagues) in all districts, presided over by district officers assisted by non-officials, which achieved considerable success partly because the rural classes had now been considerably leavened by thousands of men whose outlook had been broadened by service abroad in the Army and Labour Corps. Crowds of villagers attended Sabha meetings as well as the meetings convoked by non-co-operators. Remedial agrarian legislation improved prospects in Oudh. Later on both in these Provinces and in the Punjab Hindu and Muhammadan relations became seriously strained.

In April 1921 Lord Reading had succeeded Lord Chelmsford; and since the previous February the new Legislatures, Imperial and provincial, had discussed a variety of subjects. Landlords and lawyers predominate on these bodies. But in Western education and in all the methods of politics the former stand at a serious disadvantage. Debates have been conducted with punctilious decorum.

The Imperial Legislative Assembly began by debating martial law administration in the Punjab in April 1919. The Duke's appeal was fresh in all memories; and a resolution brought by an Indian member was met in important particulars by the Government speakers, was amended, and was passed unanimously after a discussion which had been purged of bitterness. The sessions proceeded in harmony; and the Legislature accepted the Government's proposals for fresh taxation. In the following September a debate on a resolution moved by a private member in the Legislative Assembly, in favour of the introduction of provincial autonomy and of dyarchy in the Central Government, ended in that Government's decision to communicate to the Secretary of State "the view of the Assembly that India's progress on the path of constitutional reforms warranted a re-examination and a revision of the present constitution at an earlier date than 1929." In the course of the debate the Home Member had reminded the Assembly that it represented only 1,000,000 registered voters out of 250,000,000 of people residing in British India, and that of this million only 182,000 had recorded their votes. He added that the spirit of nationality had not permeated the masses or the rural areas. It was no Indian Republic that the Moplahs were seeking to establish, but a Muhammadan Republic with the Khilafat flag as their banner. There were other very obvious divisions between the various races of India; and for many years to come the unifying influence of the British administration would be necessary for the protection of

minorities. The Government was trying to develop a spirit of nationality in the country, but could not neglect patent facts.

The Central Government's letter on this subject was practically answered by Mr. Montagu in the House of Commons on February 14, 1922; and after his resignation, which took place in the following month, his successor, Viscount Peel, replied in a formal despatch to the same effect, observing that it would be without precedent if a constitution deliberately framed to provide a basis for development in whatever direction experience might indicate were to be brought under review within a few months of its inauguration. It was clear that sufficient time had not elapsed to enable the new machinery to be adequately tested.

Except in Madras there are as yet no signs of a development of a real party system in the new Parliaments. The work of provincial ministers and Legislative Councils has been affected by financial stringency and other circumstances. The world-atmosphere in 1921 was disturbing. The masses were bewildered by the reforms and by the tolerance accorded to Mr. Gandhi and his lieutenants. Labour troubles in England, events in Egypt and Ireland, seemed to many to predict a very early retirement of England from her position in India. The new legislators, while upholding law and order on the Councils, did little to fortify the minds of their constituents against the assaults of the revolutionaries. The attack on Government and society in the country was met by the Services of the Crown and by the Police, officers and men, the latter showing remarkable courage and constancy.

On November 17, 1921, H.R.H. the Prince of Wales landed at Bombay and received a warm welcome. But on the same day brutal rioting, stirred up by the non-co-operators, produced such horrors that even Mr. Gandhi declared that Swaraj stank in his nostrils. His penitence, however, was, as always, short-lived. But a Bombay casualty-list of 53 killed and about 400 wounded, combined with hartals at Calcutta and elsewhere, largely produced by terrorism and violence on the part of the "national volunteers," impelled the Central Government to reconsider their attitude toward non-co-operation, and to instruct Provincial Governments to take vigorous measures to combat the terrorism and violence employed by its exponents. This change of attitude soon produced marked effects and the pestilence began to abate.

Although at various towns His Royal Highness was dogged by the malicious attentions of non-co-operators, he achieved

some remarkable triumphs. The story of his tour has been given to the world.

Mr. Gandhi was preparing to renew his efforts to produce "civil disobedience" when another bloody tragedy [1] marked the course of his campaign. Again he hesitated, and, at a conference held at Bardoli on February 11, 1922, resolved to suspend mass civil disobedience and other parts of his offensive. But this change of temper did not please some of his followers; and once more he moved toward "civil disobedience." His course, however, was run. On March 10, 1922, he was at last arrested. His trial passed off with absolute tranquillity. His defence was frank: "I knew the consequences of every one of my acts. I knew that I was playing with fire. I saw the risk, and if I were set free, I will still do the same." He was sentenced to be kept in simple imprisonment for six years. His principal lieutenants were already in jail. The rest had been deprived of definite objectives by the Bardoli resolutions, and could not longer quote the privileged immunity of their leader in proof of his miraculous powers. The law was enforced uniformly, and the land had rest.

Later on, however, certain prominent agitators were released, on the expiration of their sentences, and took part in a meeting of the Congress held at Gaya at the close of the year, when a new offensive was discussed. The result of various deliberations is a programme which includes efforts to collect further subscriptions for the Tilak Swaraj Memorial Fund, a boycott of selected English goods, and a campaign for the purpose of enlisting the "very selfishness" of peasants and labourers in support of non-co-operation. A movement for entering and capturing the legislative bodies in order to paralyse the constitution has many admirers and will gather volume as the 1923 elections draw near. Already Municipal Boards in some cities of the United Provinces have largely succumbed to non-co-operative canvassing. In December 1922 a member of a "Citizen's Protection League" stated in a Calcutta Indian newspaper [2] that the ramifications of non-co-operation extended to almost every town and village in Bengal, that its "emissaries of hate" were busy making profits from subscriptions levied ostensibly for national schools and the attainment of Swaraj, that it still controlled a large part of "the vituperative and

[1] A police-station at Chauri Chaura (United Provinces) was set on fire and all its inmates but two were beaten to death. The assailants were a body of men marching with set purpose.

[2] *The Amrita Bazar Patrika.*

mendacious section of the Indian press." We may also note that a recent statement of the accounts of the Central Khilafat Committee disclosed very large expenditure on "National education" and propaganda.

Non-co-operation is apparently in process of conversion by its leaders into a less spectacular but little less mischievous movement. Their objective is unchanged if their methods are altering. British power in India must be overthrown in order that from its ruins the fabric of Swaraj may rise. Whether it be the old Swaraj of the Marathas, or the later kingdom of the Sikhs, or Muslim sovereignty restored in its ancient glory, or a Bolshevik paradise, can afterwards be arranged. All that matters is that between the realisation of all these ideals stand British rule and British officials.

It is difficult to see how any members of the professional and trading classes can imagine that they would comfortably survive the anarchy which would ensue from the unrestrained conflict of these clashing interests, particularly as their present position is a product of British rule. But it seems that the supporters of non-co-operation belong largely to these very classes, and that, while individual Moderates have boldly denounced the movement, the National Liberal Association which represents Moderate political opinion has so far done very little to combat the strenuous campaigns of racial fanatics in the electorates. The general attitude of Moderates toward the agitation, which has already caused a succession of bloody tragedies and is still busily active, has, so lately as December 27 last, been described by one of their own leaders as "lacking in vitality, timid in its support of Government remedial measures and prone to allow a long rope to the non-co-operator." Sir Manakji Dadabhoy exhorted his friends to range themselves frankly and fearlessly "on the side of society and civilisation"; he warned them that "India, shattered by political dissensions and rapidly gliding down toward revolution and anarchy," could not possibly be either politically or economically great and could not "expect to have the sympathy and the blessings of the world in her struggle for freedom." But what he calls "the struggle for freedom" has proved a far more attractive pursuit than the struggle against non-co-operation. This is not surprising; but the burden on Government and its officers has been all the heavier.

India's financial and industrial history and affairs are dealt with in another part of this book. But reference must be made to the fact that the Central Government has now found

it necessary to restore financial equilibrium by raising the salt duty to its figure from 1888 to 1902, an enhancement which means a burden of about threepence a head per annum on India's populations at a time when the wages of labour have risen very considerably and the prices of food-grains have fallen. The restoration was preceded by thorough and determined efforts at retrenchment in all branches of administration civil and military, but although accepted by the Council of State it has been definitely rejected by the Imperial Legislative Assembly, which could suggest no alternative taxation. In order therefore to avoid a sixth successive annual deficit which would have further depreciated India's credit, the Viceroy has "certified" [1] this year's Finance Bill for reasons convincingly expressed in a communiqué of March 29, 1923. It seems probable that the Assembly was influenced by considerations connected with the approaching elections. But in view of the vital interests at stake, the incident is not encouraging.

Another remarkable occurrence has been the publication of the report of the Fiscal Committee appointed in 1921 and consisting of eleven members, of whom seven, including the President, were Indian and four were English. The general *ad valorem* import tariff was in March 1922 raised from 10 to 15 per cent. and it seems probable that a protective policy will be rapidly developed. It is considered necessary to secure the intensive industrialisation of India. But attempts to hurry India have been fruitful in warnings, and the voice of consumers will make itself heard.

The past two years have been marked by other important events, by the pre-eminence of frontier defence problems, by the conclusion of a satisfactory peace with Afghanistan, by the alliance between that Power and Turkey, by the abolition of the Press Act, the Rowlatt (Emergency) Act and other measures stigmatised as repressive, by debates over very difficult questions connected with the position of Indians in British colonies, by demands for the reduction of the army, for the accelerated Indianisation of civil and military Services, and by announcement that steps would be taken to Indianise entirely eight regiments as an experimental measure. Another noteworthy event is the rejection by the Imperial Legislative Assembly of the Government's Indian States (Protection from Disaffection) Bill, which was subsequently certified and passed into law by the Viceroy. The Act received His Majesty's assent after a debate in the House of Commons, where it was

[1] See p. 215.

opposed by the Labour party. Dyarchy has been introduced into Burma. A Bill for removing racial distinctions from the Criminal Procedure Code has passed harmoniously through the Imperial Legislature. Of less happy omen are the grave and growing discontent of the Imperial Services with their financial condition and uncertain prospects, and the rapid shrinkage of British recruitment, matters which are about to receive investigation from a Royal Commission.

And behind all political questions are problems supremely important to the people and their rulers which politics tend to push into the background, the means by which the land can be made more fertile for the growing multitudes who dwell thereon, the provision of capital for enterprises of a modern type and the application of the educational system to the provision of good practical instruction both for the man who will work with his hands and for the man who requires the knowledge to supervise him.

The Indian National Congress was started by men who were naturally attracted by ideals which they had learnt from English teaching. They were joined by certain Hindus who looked back regretfully to the days of the Peishwas and to far more remote times, who resented Western rule and the impact of Western civilisation. The Nationalist movement sprang from the combination of these two parties with their somewhat incongruous ambitions. Its history up to August 1917 is summarised in these pages. In that month the British Cabinet, anxious to meet all reasonable Indian aspirations and to accord grateful recognition to India's war-services, in spite of obvious dangers and difficulties, made a declaration which was intended to set the great sub-continent upon the path of responsible Government. India became a member of the Imperial Conference and of the League of Nations. A new constitution was framed which undoubtedly affords full opportunity to Indian Nationalists to lead their country in a peaceable fashion toward the goal so long demanded. This constitution has been in operation for more than two years; and British policy has been to allow it as wide a scope as possible. The men responsible for that policy, while venturing much, have naturally been reluctant to dispense with every safeguard and precaution by which the security and warfare of a great country have been buttressed in the past. Circumstances, however, have been eminently unfavourable to the new order. World-unrest and the general course of events have combined with organised revolution in India itself to dis-

turb the popular mind and to loosen the cement which was binding together the complex elements of an enormous society. The task of Government has become far more difficult. But experience is helpful ; and from all the experience of past years one lesson emerges : without the presence in Indian self-government of a partner not only sympathetic, but strong enough to co-ordinate and harmonise the interests and ambitions of races and classes, the vision of prosperous and abiding unity will never be realised.

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLES

(Alexander's date is accurate. Other dates before A.D. 320 are approximate.)

B.C.

327. Invasion of India by Alexander the Great.
322. Accession of Chandragupta Maurya.
269. Coronation of Asoka.
232. Death of Asoka.
175. Invasion of Menander.

A.D.

320–490. Gupta Empire.
405–11. Fah Hian's travels in India.
605–47. Reign of Harsha.
629–45. Yuan Chwang's travels.
712. Arab conquest of Sind.
1000–27. Incursions of Mahmud of Ghazni.
1175–1206. Conquests of Muhammad Ghori.
1206–90. The Slave Kings of Delhi.
1290–1320. The Khilji dynasty.
1325–51. Reign of Muhammad bin Tughlak.
1336. Foundation of Vijayanagar.
1347. Foundation of the Bahmani Kingdom in the Deccan.
1388. Break-up of the Tughlak sultanate.
1450–1526. Lodi dynasty at Delhi.
1498. Arrival of Vasco da Gama at Calicut.
1510. Portuguese conquest of Goa.
1518. End of the Bahmani dynasty.
1526. Babar's victory at Panipat. Beginning of the Moghal Empire.
1530. Death of Babar.
1540. Decisive defeat of Humayun by Sher Shah.
1545. Death of Sher Shah.
1555. Return of Humayun.
1556. Death of Humayun. Enthronement of Akbar.
1565. Battle of Talikota.
1576. Akbar's conquest of Bengal.
1600. Grant by Queen Elizabeth of a charter to the East India Company of London merchants.

A.D.

1605. Death of Akbar. Accession of Jehangir.
1612. Defeat of the Portuguese at sea by the English. Establishment of an English factory at Surat.
1615–18. Embassy of Sir Thomas Roe.
1620. Danish settlement at Tranquebar.
1627–8. Accession of Shah Jehan.
1640. Foundation of Madras.
1658–9. Accession of Aurangzeb.
1661. Cession of Bombay by Portugal to England.
1664. French "Compagnie des Indes" established.
1674. Pondicherry founded. Sivaji enthroned as an independent Raja.
1680. Death of Sivaji.
1690. Calcutta founded.
1702–8. Union of New and Old East India Companies.
1707. Death of Aurangzeb.
1708. Death of Gobind Singh, the tenth Sikh "guru."
1714. Balaji Vishwanath becomes Peishwa.
1739. Invasion of Nadir Shah.
1740. Dupleix Governor of Pondicherry.
1746–9. First Anglo-French war in the Karnatik.
1751–4. Second Anglo-French war in the Karnatik.
1756. Sack of Delhi by Ahmad Shah Durani. Capture of Calcutta by Siraj-ud-daula.
1757. Plassey.
1756–61. Third Anglo-French war in India.
1761. Great defeat of the Marathas by the Afghans at Panipat.
1764. Battle of Buxar.
1765. Grant of the Diwani. Clive Governor of Bengal.
1767. Clive's final departure from India. Verelst Governor of Bengal.

A.D.
1769. Cartier Governor of Bengal.
1772. Warren Hastings Governor of Bengal.
1773. Passing of the Regulating Act.
1774. The Rohilla War. Appointment of Warren Hastings to be Governor-General.
1775. Beginning of the first Maratha War.
1782. Treaty of Salbai.
1784. Treaty of Mangalore. Enactment of Pitt's India Bill.
1785. Retirement of Warren Hastings.
1786. Arrival of Cornwallis.
1792. Treaty of Seringapatam.
1793. Establishment of permanent settlement of Bengali land-revenues.
1795. Cornwallis succeeded by Shore. Capitulation of Kharda.
1798. Wellesley Governor-General.
1799. Capture of Seringapatam. Settlement of Mysore.
1801. Annexation of the Karnatik and of the ceded districts of Oudh.
1802. Treaty of Bassein.
1803. Second Maratha war. Battles of Assaye and Laswari. Treaty of Surji Arjengaon.
1804. War with Holkar. Defeat of Monson.
1805. Recall of Wellesley. Second administration and death of Cornwallis. Sir George Barlow succeeds him.
1807. Lord Minto Governor-General.
1809. Treaty of Amritsar with Ranjit Singh.
1812. Conquest of Java.
1813. Notable renewal of the East India Company's charter. Lord Hastings succeeds Lord Minto.
1814–16. War with Nipal.
1817–19. The Pindari and third Maratha Wars.
1823. Lord Amherst succeeds Lord Hastings.
1826. First Burmese War and Treaty of Yandabo.
1828. Lord William Bentinck Governor-General.
1829. Abolition of *sati*
1833. Renewal of the East India Company's charter.
1835. Lord William Bentinck succeeded by Sir Charles Metcalfe.

A.D.
1836. Lord Auckland Governor-General.
1839–42. First Afghan War.
1842. Lord Ellenborough succeeds Lord Auckland.
1843. Annexation of Sind.
1844. Sir Henry Hardinge succeeds Lord Ellenborough.
1845–6. First Sikh War.
1848. Lord Dalhousie becomes Governor-General. Second Sikh War.
1849. Annexation of the Punjab.
1852. Second Burmese War. Annexation of Pegu.
1853. Last renewal of the Company's charter.
1854–6. Crimean War. Dalhousie's reforms.
1856. Annexation of Oudh. Lord Canning succeeds Lord Dalhousie. War with Persia.
1857–8. The Mutiny.
1858 (November 1). Transfer of Government from the Company to the Crown.
1861. Indian Councils Act. Establishment of High Courts.
1862. Lord Elgin succeeds Lord Canning.
1864. Sir John Lawrence becomes Governor-General.
1866. Orissa famine.
1868. Shere Ali established as Amir of Afghanistan.
1869. Lord Mayo succeeds Sir John Lawrence.
1872. Murder of Lord Mayo. Lord Northbrook Governor-General.
1875–6. Visit of Albert Edward, Prince of Wales.
1876. Lord Northbrook succeeded by Lord Lytton.
1877. First Delhi Durbar.
1878. Vernacular Press Act.
1878–80. Second Afghan War.
1880. Lord Ripon succeeds Lord Lytton.
1882. Repeal of Vernacular Press Act.
1883–4. Ilbert Bill controversy.
1884. Lord Dufferin succeeds Lord Ripon.
1885. Panjdeh incident. Third Burmese War. First Indian National Congress.
1886. Annexation of Upper Burma.
1888–94. Lord Lansdowne's Viceroyalty.
1892. Enlargement of the Legislative

A.D

Councils by a new Indian Councils Act.

1894. Lord Elgin (II) becomes Viceroy.

1896. Arrival of Plague in India.

1897. Famine. Great frontier War.

1899. Lord Curzon becomes Viceroy.

1901. Death of Queen Victoria. Creation of North-West Frontier Province.

1903. Edward VII Coronation Durbar.

1904. Tibetan expedition.

1905. Partition of Bengal. Lord Curzon's resignation. Lord Minto (II) Viceroy.

1909. Enactment of the Minto-Morley reforms.

1910. Death of King Edward VII. Lord Minto succeeded by Lord Hardinge of Penshurst.

1911. Visit of their Majesties King George V and Queen Mary to India. Announcement of alteration of partition of Bengal and of the transfer of the capital from Calcutta to Delhi.

1912. Provinces of Bihar and Orissa and Delhi started. Attempted assassination of Lord Hardinge.

1913. Appointment of a Public Services Commission.

1914 (August 4). Declaration of war on Germany by Great Britain. Loyal response from India. On September 26 Indian Corps began to land in France.

1915. Advance of British-Indian force on Baghdad and retreat to Qut-el-Amara.

1916. Lord Chelmsford succeeds Lord Hardinge. Fall of Qut-el-Amara. Beginning of the Home Rule agitation. Notable political meetings at Lucknow.

1917. Qut-el-Amara retaken and Baghdad captured. Declaration in Parliament on August 20 of a policy aiming at the establishment of responsible Government in India. Visit to India of the Secretary of State.

1918. Publication of Montagu-Chelmsford Report. The Armistice.

1919. "Passive resistance" riots and repression thereof. Third Afghan War. Enactment of Montagu-Chelmsford reforms.

1920. Khilafat agitation. Non-co-operation preached. Parliamentary debates on Amritsar.

1921. Inauguration of the new legislative bodies by H.R.H. the Duke of Connaught. Lord Reading succeeds Lord Chelmsford. Gandhi agitation. Moplah rebellion.

1922. Visit of H.R.H. the Prince of Wales. Imprisonment of Gandhi. Agitation subsides.

1923. Finance Bill altered by the Imperial Legislative Assembly, but restored and "certified" by the Viceroy.

B—ECONOMICS

B—ECONOMICS

I

AGRICULTURE AND POPULATION

INDIA is essentially a country of small holdings. In many parts of the country the land is held mainly by families of peasant proprietors. In other parts the bulk of the land is owned by large proprietors, but even in such cases the tenant-in-chief has generally been protected by a series of Rent Acts which not only ensure him fixity of tenure during his lifetime, but often grant the right of descent of the tenure to his heirs on his death. The disruptive tendencies of the Hindu and Muhammadan laws have profoundly affected agricultural economy through encouraging the minute subdivision of land. Broadly speaking, all male members of the family—and in certain circumstances the widow and daughters too—have under these systems an absolute right to a certain share in the family property, and a partition of this among the members frequently results in the minute subdivision not only of the property, but even of the fields. Another cause of fragmentation has been at work. Except on the south-west coast and in eastern Bengal, where the rainfall is plentiful and assured, the holdings from a very early date were not compact, but so divided that each family received one strip of the highly cultivated land adjoining the village and protected by its wells, another of the intermediate zone, and a third of the outlying area which was poor and precarious and difficult to protect from wild animals. This system has now become stereotyped, and a change would not only involve a redistribution of the land, but would mean that a number of the inhabitants would have to leave the villages and build houses and wells nearer their holdings.

The original size of the holding seems to have been based in a measure on the ploughing capacity of a yoke of oxen, the wealthier men taking in proportion to the number of cattle owned. But with the growth of population and the consequent land hunger there has been a constant tendency towards cutting down the size of the holding. Another and still more

unfortunate result of this increase of the population has been the tendency on the part of peasant proprietors and secured tenants to sub-let at rack-rents portions of their holdings to sub-tenants, mainly of the lower castes. Over such a wide area as agricultural India it is difficult to generalise as to the present size of the holding, and, to give any true idea of the unit of cultivation, this should be supplemented by figures of the proportion let to sub-tenants. On an average, however, the holding may be said not to exceed five acres, is often scattered over a number of small fields and held not by single farmers, but by joint families. It must be borne in mind, too, that these small patches are devoted to the growing of staple crops and not market-gardening.

Such conditions are not only inimical to agricultural progress, but afford little opportunity to the mass of the population of rising from their age-long poverty. Though the larger holders live in comparative comfort, the majority have too little land adequately to support themselves and their families, or even to occupy more than a portion of their time. Progress is impeded by indebtedness, lack of capital, and the conditions under which agricultural work is carried on in many parts of the country. Small and widely scattered holdings do not lend themselves to the employment of modern field implements, neither are the cattle ordinarily strong enough to work them nor to carry out more exacting processes of tillage. The Indian cultivator has adapted his implements and processes to the conditions under which he has to work and the materials he found at hand: he is slow to adopt more modern methods, not so much that he lacks the necessary skill or enterprise, as that many are not suited to his environment.

A remarkable circumstance for a country of the size of India, broken as its surface is by mountains and deep valleys, is that its soils fall into very few distinctive groups. Within the groups, fields and tracts may vary widely in permeability, soil texture, supplies of plant food, etc.; but the general type prevails. Gujarat, the basins of the Indus and the Ganges, the deltas of the Brahmaputra, the Irrawaddy, and the east-coast rivers, are all fertile alluvium which responds readily to cultivation and on the whole is benefited by irrigation. Its characteristics are the large proportion of land which is cropped twice every year, and the dense population per acre cultivated. A region comprising most of the Bombay Presidency, Berar, parts of the Central Provinces and Haidarabad, contains some 200,000 square miles of "Deccan trap," distinguished by soils

extremely friable but very retentive of moisture, known from their predominating colour and crop as "black cotton." These soils absorb moisture readily; but the true deep black cotton soil is not well suited for irrigation. This tract is an area of extensive, rather than intensive, cultivation, and the population per 100 acres of cultivated area is less than half that of the deltaic region.

Between these two well-defined areas comes, in the form of a broad loop, the third great stretch of Indian soils. It reaches from Rajputana to the confines of Bengal, and then turns southward, covering the Eastern Central Provinces, Mysore and most of the Madras Presidency, and thus enveloping the Deccan trap area. Its soils are for the most part derived from crystalline rocks characteristic of the Peninsula proper and present more diversity than either of the other two groups, though they are easily recognised by their colour, which passes through every shade of red from a deep tint to a yellowish brown. In this belt are some of the most fertile tracts of India, and also portions which at present do not repay cultivation, but at best only support a scanty debased herbage.

The general distribution of crops corresponds with this rough division of soils. The first area—the alluvium—carries large stretches of rice, wheat, jute, oil-seeds, sugar-cane, pulses, tobacco and indigo; the second is pre-eminently the land of cotton and millets; the products of the third are more varied and, according to situation and local conditions, comprise all the crops of India, but on a smaller scale. The second area—the Deccan trap—with those portions of the third area adjoining it, are the parts of India which most frequently suffer from deficient rainfall, though, in the alluvium area, the Punjab and parts of the United Provinces are also affected at times.

The following table, based on the figures for British India for 1917–18, a year of excellent rainfall and, therefore, one which places the second area in its most favourable light, illustrates the chief economic characteristics of these three tracts:

—	Alluvium.	Deccan trap.	Crystalline, etc.
Percentage of area cropped to total cultivable area	65	78	57
Percentage of area bearing two crops to area cropped	23	3½	12½
Population per 100 acres of land cultivated	130	66	114

In a year of good rainfall in India little more than 100 acres of crops are raised for every 100 of population, whereas in Canada, in 1914, for every 100 of population 420 acres of crops were raised.

The agricultural year is divided into four seasons, viz. June to October, the period of the south-west monsoon; October to December, the months of the retreating monsoon, often referred to as the north-east monsoon; December to February, the cold weather; and March to May, the hot weather. The last, for the greater part of India, is the resting period of plant growth. The south-west monsoon brings rain to Western India and the Northern and Central regions, as also to Bengal, Assam and Lower Burma. It is impossible to exaggerate the anxiety with which its approach is awaited and its progress watched. A good and well-distributed monsoon means abundant work, good crops and low prices; a bad monsoon means poor crops, contracting trade and shrinking revenues, and may, if continued, bring to some tracts the menace of famine. The eastern and southern part of the Peninsula proper receives only a few showers in this period: it derives its main fall from the retreating monsoon in October to December, at which time also some light showers, of great benefit to the late-sown crops of the Punjab and Central India, usually fall. There are thus two main seasons for sowing; the chief one is with the advent of the south-west monsoon and extends to the end of July; the other is commonly in October and November, to utilise the rains of the north-east monsoon. The former crops—known throughout most of India as the *kharif*—are harvested from September to December, and the late-sown ones —the *rabi*—in March and April. There is a well-marked distinction between the kharif and rabi crops in Northern India, as the latter have to withstand low night temperatures in the cold-weather months. In Madras, where such extremes of temperature are not experienced, there is not the same distinction of kind between the crops of the two main sowing seasons.

In spite of India's large exports of raw vegetable produce, her agriculturists work mainly to feed the 320,000,000 of their own country. Her normal production annually of foodstuffs is some 80,000,000 tons, of which only 2 per cent. is exported. Before the war India produced in most years more wheat than all the Dominions combined, and yet her wheat-production is less than one-quarter of her rice-crop. In 1917–18, 82 per cent. of the area cultivated in British India was under food grains,

of which one-third was sown with rice. The next most important food crops are wheat, large millet, pulses, small millet, barley and maize. Among industrial crops the chief are cotton, jute and oil-seeds, but the acreage of these combined is only about equal to that under wheat alone. India gets the large crops she does from the immense areas on which they are sown, for the average yields per acre are low. In this connection it must be remembered that Indian agriculture is predominantly arable farming. Livestock and dairying do not play the part they do in the mixed farming of Europe, and consequently the tendency is to grow crops on lands which, if livestock were more important, would be devoted to pasturage. The yields per acre naturally differ widely in different parts, but for British India as a whole are usually taken as rice 1,060 lb., wheat 800 lb., large millet 800 lb., barley 1,000 lb., cotton 87 lb. (lint), jute 1,250 lb., linseed 350 lb., and sugar-cane 22 tons of cane.

Some brief notices may be given of the more important of these crops. *Rice* is a vital factor in the country's welfare. It is the most widely distributed of any of the crops, and in a good year occupies about 80,000,000 acres. Its produce forms the staple food of the people of Bengal, Bihar, Assam, Madras and Burma. It is essentially a crop for moist, humid climates and requires a fairly abundant rainfall.

Wheat on the other hand is the great food crop of North-Western India, and is practically all grown north and west of a line from Bombay to Jubbulpore, chiefly in the Punjab and United Provinces. It is a winter crop, coming to harvest in March to May. Its acreage in a good year is about 25,000,000. The same areas also produce barley (8,000,000 acres).

The *millets*, of which the chief are *jowar* (sorghum vulgare) 21,000,000–22,000,000 acres and *bajra* (pennisetum)—13,000,000–15,000,000 acres—are almost entirely found west of a line drawn from Madras to Cawnpore, which also covers the cotton area of India. They are sown mainly with the south-west monsoon, but in the extreme south of the Peninsula cultivators wait for the north-east monsoon.

India comes second to the United States in the weight of *cotton* produced. About 22,000,000 acres are annually sown with cotton, which yield about 4,500,000 bales of 400 lb. each. The main characteristic of Indian cotton is its short staple; which renders it unsuitable for spinning the higher counts. Efforts are being made in most parts of the cotton-growing

area to improve the staple, and these are meeting with a fair measure of success, particularly in the Punjab.

Oil-seeds (13,000,000 acres) cover a wide range of important industrial crops—e.g. linseed, rapeseed, groundnut and castor. The total value of the oil-seeds produced annually in India is placed at over £50,000,000.

Jute (3,000,000 acres) is the great industrial crop of the Ganges—Brahmaputra delta. The annual production of bales of 400 lb. each increased from 2,750,000 in 1874 to 10,000,000 in 1914. India possesses in this crop a most valuable monopoly.

It is impossible to recite the minor crops. The most important are sugar-cane, indigo, coco-nuts, pulses, spices and hemp.

Of the crops grown on capitalistic lines, mainly by European planters, the most important are tea, coffee and rubber. Indian *tea* did not begin seriously to compete on the London market till the late fifties of last century. In 1868 the exports were 8,000,000 lb. In 1918 the area under tea was nearly 700,000 acres and the production was 380,000,000 lb. The chief tea areas are in Assam and the Travancore Hills.

Coffee was introduced into Mysore in 1830, and cultivation spread rapidly in Southern India. In the decade 1877–87 insect ravages and low prices ruined many estates. The area under coffee is now about 210,000 acres, mainly in Mysore and the Shevaroy Hills in Madras.

Though the first *rubber* estates were only planted in India in 1902, they now extend to an area of 120,000 acres. The tree is grown mostly near the foothills in Malabar, Cochin and Travancore, and in the Mergui and Tavoy regions of Burma.

The direction of measures for the improvement of agriculture rests with the provincial Departments of Agriculture, assisted by the Central Research Institute at Pusa (Bihar). The principal provinces maintain fully-trained scientific staffs, with trained agriculturists in the districts, while in British India there are now nine agricultural colleges with over 700 students. In addition, 146 stations have been opened where local crops and their treatment are studied in detail. The lessons there learnt are then carried out by way of demonstration on the farmer's own field and with his aid.

For reasons already indicated, serious difficulties presented themselves in bringing about any modifications of existing practices, and the chief success has been achieved in evolving and distributing new and improved strains of existing crops, possessing either superior yielding power or better quality of

produce. Where such strains could be cultivated by traditional methods with little or no additional cost, they have been readily taken up and brought increased income to the farmer. As an instance of the successful results obtained in this manner may be mentioned the introduction into the Punjab, after some years of experiment, of varieties of cotton of the American type to supersede the local short-staple type. Over half a million acres are now under these selected varieties, which are worth at least £1 per acre more than the local kinds. Some idea of the improvement which it is possible to effect by work on these lines may be gathered from the results of growing selected varieties of rice in Bengal, which have been found to give on an average from 246 to 490 lb. per acre more than the local strains. In view of the enormous area under this crop, the more general adoption of the improved varieties would mean an appreciable addition to the food-supplies of the country.

Where, however, the change of varieties calls also for a radical change of methods of farming, the inherent difficulties in the way of improvement have asserted themselves. Though India has a larger area under sugar-cane than any other country of the world—in fact nearly half the world's acreage—so small is her out-turn per acre that she finds it necessary to import large quantities of sugar, costing on an average some 20 crores[1] a year. But the yields obtained in other countries can only be obtained by an outlay on good tillage and manuring which are beyond the means of the ordinary Indian farmer, and the demonstrations of the Agricultural Department have met with little response. With crops, such as sugar, where more costly and scientific cultivation is required, capitalist enterprise, with farms on a large scale, will probably have to step in to supersede, or at any rate assist, the small peasant farmer.

Another line of advance started in the present century and possessed of great potentialities has been the improvement of wells by means of deep boring with power-plant, and the raising of water by use of small-power internal-combustion engines. In tracts subject to periodic drought work of this nature is of great practical importance, and its successful development has added not a little to the prestige of the various provincial Departments.

All this work of agricultural improvement has to be patiently built up from the bottom. The majority of the Indian cultivators are illiterate, and the method of suggesting improve-

[1] 1 crore (= 100 lakhs) = 10 million rupees = £667,000.

ments through the medium of leaflets and speeches cannot be relied upon, as in Western Europe. Their place has to be taken by ocular demonstration. But the results obtained in a short time by a limited staff afford excellent promise for the future.

Mention must be made of one more line of activity undertaken to improve the condition of the peasantry. An Act authorising the formation of co-operative credit societies was passed in 1904. The privileges were extended both to credit societies and those engaged in trade, e.g. for the purchase of agricultural necessities, or joint-stock sale of agricultural produce.

Agricultural credit was the first activity to be organised. The local money-lender is frequently the local trader; and, though he performs a very necessary service to the village community, the small farmer often finds himself hampered in any agricultural enterprise by the unpleasant necessity of handing over to the trader a large portion of his crop after harvest in payment of earlier debts. The security being indifferent, the rate of interest charged is usually high: debts run on, the principal is rarely discharged, and the small farmer finds himself more or less permanently in the hands of the money-lender. Credit he must have to prepare for the coming harvest, and the best form yet evolved has proved to be co-operative credit.

In 1919–20 there were 31,800 agricultural credit societies at work in British India, with a total working capital of 856 lakhs[1] (say £5,660,000). This denotes one of the first steps in the organisation of the peasant farmer. The growth of non-credit societies has been much slower. In the same year there were only 597 such societies. Apart, however, from the registered co-operative societies there are large numbers of associations of cultivators in the villages working in close touch with the officers of the Agricultural Department in the production of pure seed, joint use of more efficient implements, etc.

Population

The first attempt to take a general census of India was made between the years 1867 and 1871. Though the arrangements had not then been perfected, it paved the way for the first regular census on modern lines in 1881. The census of 1871 showed a population of 207,000,000; that of 1881 of 253,000,000,

[1] 1 lakh = 100,000 rupees = about £6,670.

which had risen to 319,000,000 in 1921. Of this total 247,000,000 were in British India and 72,000,000 in native states. Hindus form the great bulk of the population, numbering 216,750,000, followed by Muhammadans with 68,750,000.

The density of the population varies enormously in different parts of the country. In the fertile plains of Bengal the average is as high as 551 persons per square mile, or many more than any European country except England and Belgium. The barren and rugged hills of Baluchistan, a country larger than the British Isles, contain a population of only six to the square mile. In Europe the density of the population is largely determined by the progress made in commerce or industries. In India, where three out of every four persons gain their livelihood from the soil, the predominant factors are the fertility of the soil and the distribution of the rainfall. Throughout India the most thickly populated tracts are those with level fertile plains, where there is scarcely any land unfit for tillage and which enjoy an equitable rainfall. In parts of Bengal the population rises to over 1,000 per square mile, and while it is computed that agriculture in Europe cannot support more than 250 persons to the square mile, there are tracts in India which support three and even four times that number.

Though the past fifty years have witnessed the phenomenal growth of a few big commercial centres, such as Calcutta and Bombay, these have made scarcely any perceptible effect on the general distribution of the population. India remains essentially rural. There are in all 2,153 towns with a population of over 5,000, yet their total inhabitants number under 30,000,000. One-third of the whole population, viz. 102,000,000, still lives in villages with under 500 inhabitants, and nine-tenths in villages of 5,000 inhabitants or under.[1] Treating as cities only those places with a population of over 100,000, India has only 30 such cities with an aggregate population of 7,000,000, or 2 per cent. of her population.

II

FORESTS AND IRRIGATION

THE connection between Forests and Irrigation may not be immediately apparent; but, in fact, the work of the man in the hills gravely affects that of the man in the plains. The forests are the headquarters of Nature's irrigation scheme; and as the vegetation on the hillsides is preserved, so is rain

[1] In India a place of 5,000 inhabitants or less is classified as a "village."—ED.

that falls on the hills given off in gentle flow to the benefit of the fields below; whilst, as may be seen in many parts of India, if the forests be denuded the hillsides are soon washed bare, whilst heavy tropical downpours damage by their floods the lowland cultivation and are then exhausted. The primary principle of forest administration in India has thus been, and must be, conservation, since on the prevention of floods and the regulated utilisation of supplies of water depend all the irrigation-works which mean so much to the livelihood of the peoples of India.

The extension of cultivation has undoubtedly resulted in the cutting down of much forest growth, mainly on the plains, owing to the wasteful methods of primitive tribes who cut down and burn jungle to grow their crops. It was in the early sixties of the last century that a trained Forest Department, with preservation in the forefront of its policy, began to be organised. Over one-fifth of the total area of British India is now in the charge of the Forest Department. Of this area, exceeding 250,000 square miles, almost one-half is under direct control. The balance is still "unclassed," i.e. the control consists of very little more than the collection of revenue and general supervision, until the area is either definitely given for cultivation or finally added to the "reserved" forests.

The degree and method of control exercised over the forests varies with the purpose a forest is classified as serving. They are divided into:

(*a*) Forests the preservation of which is essential on climatic and physical grounds. These are mainly on hillsides.

(*b*) Forests containing valuable commercial timber, e.g. teak in Burma, the *sal* forests in Eastern India, the deodar and pines of the North-West Himalayas.

(*c*) Minor forests supplying inferior timber and serving local needs for firewood, agricultural timber, grazing, etc.

(*d*) "Pasture" lands. These are really grazing-grounds, but are managed by the Forest Department for convenience.

In many parts of India, especially in the Peninsular area, the management of the third of these classes occupies much of a Forest officer's time. In 1918–19 over 5,000,000 cubic feet of timber, 80,000,000 cubic feet of firewood, and 4,000,000 rupees' worth of fodder grass, etc., were issued from this class of forests.

The chief timbers and the forest industries of India are of more general interest than the supply of local requirements. The most famous of the timbers is *teak*, which for more than a century has been the wood most needed by the Navy. The

estimated amount of teak annually available for world purposes is 280,000 tons, of which Burma supplies 225,000. This tree does not occur there in forests of pure teak, but scattered among other species. Trees are girdled three years before felling, and are then floated down the rivers. Exploitation is done mainly by commercial firms. Plantations of teak have been made elsewhere, notably in Malabar and Chittagong.

Apart from this well-known staple, India possesses many beautiful hard timbers, suitable for parquet flooring, panelling and furniture, railway carriages, etc. Amongst these are *padauk*, a wood similar to mahogany, from the Andamans and Burma; Indian laurel wood; Indian silver-grey wood, and *pynkado*, an exceptionally strong wood; red cedar; *gurjan;* and *sisson*, a wood of rich brown colour. Among the ornamental Indian woods already known in Europe may be mentioned rosewood, red sanders, sandal-wood, and satin-wood from South India.

The utility of the forests does not end with their effect on cultivation and climate and the extraction of timber. Certain forest industries of high importance are also dependent on them. In the forefront of these comes the collection of *lac* and the manufacture of *shellac*, an essential ingredient in a vast number of modern articles ranging from varnishes to gramophone records and felt hats. Grasses are also extracted for the manufacture of *paper pulp*, and much attention is being given to the utilisation of *bamboos* for this purpose. Another purely forest industry is now being established on a commercial scale, viz. the collection of *resin* from the pines on the foothills and lower slopes of the Himalayas. The local factories, whose supply area can be greatly increased if necessary, yield nearly 2,400 tons of resin and 156,000 gallons of *turpentine*.

In the five years 1864–68 the average annual gross receipts from forests were 3,7 lakhs of rupees, and the expenditure 2,4 lakhs. In the quinquennium 1914–18 these annual average figures had risen to 3,71 lakhs and 2,11 lakhs respectively, with a surplus balance of 1,60 lakhs. India has obviously in her forests not only a property vital to her well-being, but also one immediately profitable, and of incalculable potential value in the future.

Irrigation.—Irrigation is constantly mentioned in connection with cultivation in India; yet it is difficult for anyone familiar only with English practice to realise what this means or entails. Thus, in 1917–18, two out of every nine acres of crop raised in British India were watered artificially, and the total areas

so watered exceeded by 50 per cent. the cultivated area of Great Britain. Taking India as a whole, it may be said that there are certain parts, such as Lower Burma, Eastern Bengal and Assam, where the rainfall is plentiful to excessive. There are other tracts, and these form the majority, where the rainfall in a normal year may be sufficient, but is liable to uneven distribution, or to such serious deficiency as to expose the tract to the danger of famine. Thirdly, there are parts, chiefly in the north, where the rainfall is ordinarily insufficient to mature the crop, and agriculture would be impossible without an irrigation system.

The commonest sources of irrigation are wells and tanks. Exact numerical statistics are difficult to obtain, but probably nearly 30 per cent. of the crops of India are irrigated from wells. Tanks may range from small ponds to comparatively big storage works with sluices and outlet-channels from which water can be drawn to the fields. But it is in the construction of canals upon rivers that the achievements have been most remarkable. These are usually divided into two classes: those drawing their supplies from perennial rivers, and those which depend upon water stored in artificial reservoirs. The former are mainly found in connection with the snow-fed rivers rising in the Himalayas, which afford an inexhaustible supply of water; the latter are more common in the Peninsula proper, where it is necessary to impound the river-water in huge storage works which often form lakes of several square miles for use in the dry season. Of this class is the Periyar lake, constructed for the supply of the Madura district in Madras, where water was deficient. At a height of 3,000 feet above the sea-level a masonry dam 175 feet high was thrown across the Periyar river in its course to the western sea. An immense lake was thus formed, and this, by the construction of a long channel, which in its course tunnels the watershed, is used for irrigating 200,000 acres in the Madura district. The general characteristics of this class of work are the same everywhere—costly and solid head-works on the rivers, and carefully aligned large canals as main distributaries, with many minor channels taking from them. It is in this class of work, involving great technical skill and requiring large sums of capital, that Government has played the largest part.

The work was begun in 1835–36, when first the Cauvery and then the Godavari systems were constructed. After this, construction of irrigation works by private companies was tried, but proved a financial failure, and it was decided that it

should be undertaken by the State out of loan funds. Since then progress has been rapid and constant. The main distributary canals, alone, under the charge of Irrigation Officers, are now 13,000 miles in length. An area of 270,000 acres has on an average been added every year for the last twenty-five years to the total area irrigated in the Punjab alone, i.e. an addition to the irrigated area in one province of a tract comparable in extent to the six northern counties of England. Not only have crops been thereby rendered safer and land previously under cultivation more productive, but land which for centuries had defied the labour and ingenuity of the cultivator now carries a large population and grows heavy crops of cotton and wheat. For instance, ten years ago the land now occupied by the Lower Bari Doab Colony was desert without a vestige of cultivation. The waters of the rivers which skirt it, the Ravi and the Sutlej, had already been fully utilised and had none to spare; the Chenab, the river next in the north, was in like condition. But farther north still was the Jhelum river with water to spare. Some of this water was used to compensate the Chenab, whilst Chenab water was brought across the Ravi to convert the Lower Bari Doab from a desert to a tract yielding annually £2,000,000 of cotton and over £1,000,000 of wheat, besides other crops. Part of this land is specially reserved for officers and soldiers of the Indian Army who have had a distinguished military career. Such is the romance of irrigation in India, and such is the scale on which it is conceived.

Several new projects of first magnitude have been prepared, perhaps the most important of which is the Sukkur Barrage in Sindh. This will involve the construction of a barrage across the Indus, nearly a mile long between abutments—by far the biggest work of its kind so far undertaken. From this barrage seven canals will take off, estimated to irrigate over 5,000,000 acres, some 3,000,000 of which are now almost entirely uncultivated. Its completion will throw open to cultivation a tract of country resembling Egypt in many of its characteristics, which it is hoped may rival it in its cotton-growing capacity.

The area irrigated varies with the character of the season, but, taking the year 1919–20, the total area irrigated by all classes of works in British India amounted to a little over 27,000,000 acres. The total length of main and branch canals and distributaries from which this irrigation was effected amounted to 66,754 miles. The estimated value of the crops

irrigated by Government works amounted to £156,000,000, or double the total capital expenditure on the works.

The return for irrigation expenditure is obtained by a charge for the water, a moderate one, usually levied on an acreage basis, or varying with the crop raised. In 1920–21 the Government had invested on major irrigation works £70,600,000, which, after making all charges for maintenance, interest and loss on works of an unproductive character and built only as a protection against famine, yielded a net profit of over 4 per cent.

It has been truly said of these works, "No similar works in other countries approach in magnitude the irrigation works in India, and no public works of nobler utility have ever been undertaken in the world."

III

INDUSTRIES AND COMMERCE

INDIA, though ancient in handicrafts, is young industrially. From the time that the merchant adventurers of the West made their first appearance in the country, its delicate muslins, wrought by hand, were one of the most prized articles of commerce, and frequent mention is made of the excellence of its velvets and brocades, and the skill of its workers in precious metals and ivory. Even at the present day there is a large internal demand for handwoven cottons, silks and printed goods. In 1918 it was estimated that there were still two to three million hand looms at work in India. But for a number of reasons India's industrial development on modern lines was slow. Doubtless the absence of an energetic and enterprising middle class, to which the industrial revolution in England was mainly due, and the difficulty experienced in the first instance of adapting Western discoveries to tropical conditions, were contributing factors; but the main reason for the slowness of the development, both of India's industries and foreign trade, was the lack of internal communications and the cost and duration of the voyage to the west of Europe, which was the birthplace of the modern industrial system. As soon as railways were introduced in India, large steamships took the place of sailing-vessels, and as the opening of the Suez Canal shortened the sea journey between Europe and India, there was a marked advance, not only in the trade relations with foreign countries, but in the growth of modern manufacturing industries.

Though the valleys of the Narbada and the Tapti had been

for ages devoted to the growing of cotton, it was not till 1851 that the first cotton-mill was opened in Bombay by a Parsee, Mr. C. N. Davar. The industry was greatly hampered by the difficulty of procuring coal, which in the first instance, owing to lack of communications in India, was imported from England, and the number of mills increased slowly. In about thirty years' time the number had risen to 63, but from 1890 onward there was a rapid extension, interrupted only by the outbreak of the war. In 1920 there were in India 263 cotton-mills, containing 117,558 looms and over 6,500,000 spindles. They employ a daily average of 305,511 persons. The annual average production of yarn had then reached 630,000,000 lb., and that of woven goods about 350,000,000.

The jute industry, which is centred in Calcutta, started a little later. Its record is one of continuous progress, though the tendency has been rather to increase the number of looms and spindles in operation than mills at work. In 1919–20 there were 76 mills, employing a daily average of 275,000 persons. The exports alone in that year ran into 583,000,000 sacks and over 1,100,000,000 yards of sacking, of a total value of 52 crores of rupees.

The predominant position occupied by these two industries may be gauged from the fact that, taken together, they give employment to more than half the number of persons employed in factories worked by mechanical power. There are in addition a number of subsidiary industries in the shape of cotton gins and presses and jute-presses.

If industries essentially combined with agriculture—such as tea, coffee and indigo factories—and mines and electric-supply stations be excluded, there were in 1919–20 4,376 factories, worked by mechanical or electric power, in India giving employment to a daily labour force of slightly over a million persons. Next in importance to the jute and cotton mills may be placed the rice-mills, mostly in Burma, numbering 608 and employing some 48,000 persons. Among other industries employing smaller numbers are oil-mills 168, saw-mills 130, engineering workshops 118, printing presses 116, railway workshops 66, flour-mills 55, iron and brass foundries 55, silk filatures 50, and sugar factories 37. The smallness of some of these numbers shows how the old traditional methods still persist in the villages and districts.

Elsewhere in this book the recent political changes in the constitution of India have been described. To many, however, interest in these is rivalled by interest in the industrial

development of the country. There has grown up in India a widespread belief that she is capable of much greater industrial effort on modern lines than hitherto. The events of the war, when she was largely cut off from her former sources of supply and compelled to make locally many articles previously imported, emphasised this. This feeling has found vent in movements from time to time to boycott foreign goods, and in schemes for starting small factories for the manufacture of articles in common use, often founded rather on enthusiasm than practical experience.

The reasons for her slow start in modern industries have been noticed above. Even when a certain measure of success had been attained, the educated classes on the whole held aloof. There had always been a large and important trading section in the Indian community, but with the expansion of foreign trade this class found a safer and more profitable employment for their capital in exporting the produce of the country and selling articles manufactured abroad than in embarking upon industrial enterprises, for which they lacked experience and technical knowledge. The whole idea of joint-stock enterprise was, too, foreign to Eastern conceptions, and thus it was left to Europeans and Parsees, whose natural abilities have won for themselves a leading position in Indian industries and commerce, to start most of the big industries, such as cotton, jute, coal, sugar, cement, iron, etc. So little did mechanical pursuits appeal to the educated classes that it was common, in the earlier days, in Indian-owned concerns, for the necessary technical skill to be supplied by European engineers and foremen.

With the opening of the twentieth century a change of feeling became apparent. The handsome profits obtained from some of these industries, the growing difficulty of finding careers for the younger men educated on Western lines, alike attracted attention to these industries. A natural sentiment, too, desired a greater share for Indians in the development of the resources of their own country. The great industrial advance of Japan appealed strongly to the imagination of Indians, who saw in Japanese progress and efficiency an example of what could be accomplished by an Eastern nation. Under this stimulus many of the younger generation began to equip themselves with an industrial training, and, successful commerce having provided ample capital, the number of concerns owned and worked by Indians greatly increased. That a definite advance has been made may be gathered from

the fact that the number of large industrial concerns worked by mechanical or electric power has increased from 1,856 in 1905 to 4,376 in 1920, and the number of joint-stock companies from 1,728 to 3,668. Though, looking to India's natural resources, future progress, probably in an accelerated degree, may be considered assured, the difficulties should not be overlooked. Labour, though superficially cheap, is relatively inefficient, and, never having taken very kindly to factory life, it is somewhat unstable. In the higher mechanical skill required to carry out the more difficult technical tasks the Indian workman is still much behind his Western confrère. Though the number of trained men competent to direct and control the somewhat ignorant labour force is increasing, it is still inadequate for any large industrial expansion. Industry accordingly tends to confine itself to established lines, rather than branch into new ventures. Finally, in a tropical country, where nature is generally bountiful, but continuous manual labour trying, the attractions of agriculture and commerce may prove so far superior to those of the factory that the process of industrialisation may prove slower than in more temperate climates.

Foreign Trade

The chief trade of India has always been with countries lying to the west. From very early times traders traversed the difficult north-west land-route to the Caspian and Black Seas. In the seventh century B.C. a sea-route was opened to the head of the Persian Gulf, and thence by caravan through Mesopotamia to Egypt and Syria. In the third century A.D. another sea-route to the head of the Red Sea was added. In those days India exported spices, precious stones and cotton goods, and took in return gold and silver, the baser metals and cloth. In subsequent centuries her trade hardly developed in nature or volume. Even the opening of an all-sea route between India and Europe by Vasco da Gama in 1498 brought no immediate change in the staple articles of commerce. The lack of metalled roads in India required all produce to be carried on pack-animals to the ports or rivers where boats could be used, and the area which ports could serve was therefore very limited. Further, the cost of ocean freight round the Cape of Good Hope and the limited capacity of sailing-vessels rendered it impossible to carry bulky goods of low value, and consequently the Eastern trade was restricted to articles high in value but small in bulk.

The ships of the East India Company first visited India in 1608; in the early days of their operations the Company's annual fleet for the whole of its Eastern trade as far as the China Seas consisted of five or six ships, of which the largest was 600 tons. As late as 1813, when the abolition of the Company's charter was under consideration, it was stated that the value of the trade was only £2,500,000. In 1834, when the Company's trade operations ceased, the value of the whole trade (export and import) of India was only a little over £14,000,000 (taking the rupee as then equivalent to 2*s*.), of which the net import of gold and silver accounted for nearly one-seventh. Eighty years later (i.e. in 1913–14), the value of the total foreign trade of India exceeded £342,000,000 (taking the rupee as equivalent to 1*s*. 4*d*.), of which the net import of gold and silver accounted for £25,000,000, and India, in the value of her foreign trade, was only surpassed by Great Britain, the United States, Germany, Belgium, Holland and France. In fact the last sixty years, when compared with the previous thousand, have witnessed a complete revolution in Indian trade. This great change has been mainly brought about by the introduction of railways and improvement of overseas communications, which have not merely opened the markets of the world to all parts of the country, but have given an immense stimulus to the development of India's natural wealth.

Before dealing with the distribution of this trade, it would be convenient at this stage to set out the principal heads of merchandise imported and exported, which will show the main lines of trade. For this purpose the average of the five years preceding the war may be taken; the war introduced so many disturbing factors that that period and the following years will be separately alluded to.

Articles of import and export are classified for convenience of arrangement under the following heads:

—	Imports.	Exports.
	(crores)	(crores)
1. Food, drink and tobacco (grain, sugar, tea, spices, etc.)	21·8	62·9
2. Raw materials and articles mainly unmanufactured (cotton, coals, oils, silk, etc.)	10·0	102·5
3. Articles wholly or mainly manufactured (yarns, textile fabrics, machinery, railway plant, metals, hardware, glassware, etc.)	111·8	51·8
Total	143·6	217·2

Under the first head the main article of import was sugar (13 crores), largely brought from Java. Grain (45 crores) and tea (13 crores) were the main items of export.

Oils (4 crores) were the most important of the raw materials imported, and cotton (33 crores), seeds, largely oil-seeds (24 crores), of those exported.

The list of manufactured articles imported is wide and varied: piece goods (52 crores), machinery and other manufactures of iron and steel (16 crores) were the most important. The manufactured articles exported included jute fabrics (20 crores) and cotton fabrics and yarn (10 crores).

In addition to the above, India's net imports of treasure amounted to some 39 crores.

The outstanding features of the above figures are (1) the excess of exports over imports and (2) the heavy absorption of silver and gold. By means of this excess of exports, India is able to liquidate her foreign obligations including charges for Government debt held in England, home charges for services rendered, freight and insurance charges, interest on foreign capital invested in India. The constant absorption of treasure in India is due to the hoarding habits of the people, stimulated by many centuries of war and oppression, and to the social demand for jewellery and ornaments. Pliny commented on this thirst of India for gold and silver nearly two thousand years ago, and it is likely to continue until the habit of banking becomes more common and the standard of living rises generally.

In such a story of rapid expansion it would be natural to find a steady increase in the number of countries with which India trades direct, and this tendency has been more noticeable in the export than the import trade. The great bulk of the imports, both before and after the war, came from the United Kingdom.

In 1913 the percentage shares of the different countries of the world in the import and export trade of India were as follows:

Imports.	Percentage.	Exports.	Percentage.
United Kingdom	64·1	United Kingdom	23·7
Rest of Empire	5·9	Rest of Empire	14·3
Germany	6·9	Germany	10·6
Java	5·8	Japan	9·2
Japan	2·6	United States	8·9
United States	2·6	France	7·1
Belgium	2·3	Belgium	4·9
Austria-Hungary	2·3	Austria-Hungary	4·0
France	1·5	Italy	3·2
Italy	1·2	China	2·3
Rest of world	4·7	Rest of world	11·8

India, indeed, is Great Britain's best customer. Her share in the total exports of produce and merchandise of the United Kingdom in the five years 1909–13 was 11·9 per cent., whilst next came Germany and the United States with 8·4 per cent. and 6·5 per cent. respectively. These figures do not, however, disclose the full importance of India to the trade of the United Kingdom, as many of her exports to other countries are negotiated through bills on London, and are carried in British ships and insured in the London market.

In the thirty years prior to 1913 Germany, Java, Japan and the United States had very considerably increased their exports to India. Java's contribution consisted almost entirely of sugar, and that of the United States largely of mineral oil. Both the German and Japanese trade covered a large number of miscellaneous and very cheap articles. In big lines Germany chiefly figured in piece goods, metals and dyes, and Japan in silks. In the matter of exports, prior to the war, Germany was the chief recipient of rice and raw hides; France, Britain and Germany of oil-seeds; Britain, Germany and the United States of jute; Britain of wheat and tanned hides. Since the war the percentage shares of the principal countries have undergone some change. The share of the United Kingdom in 1921–22 had slightly fallen off, while both Japan and the United States had improved their position, the import percentage of the former having risen to 5·1 per cent. and of the latter to 8·1 per cent.

In this highly organised and widespread trade the sudden outbreak of the war in August 1914 produced temporary chaos. Many of India's markets were cut off, and a heavy drop of prices ensued in articles which had hitherto been exported in large quantities to the Continent, such as cotton, oil-seeds, raw hides, etc. Soon, however, the dominant economic feature of India's export trade asserted itself, viz. that her exports consist of necessities, and not luxuries, of life, coupled with the fact that the necessities of peace are largely the essentials of war. In an ever-increasing degree India was called upon to assist in equipping the expanding armies in the East with all kinds of goods, from food, khaki and blankets to railway material. The list of essential articles of which India was the sole, or chief, source of supply is very large, and included jute and jute bags for all the sand-bags and sacking, mica for the magnetos and electrical apparatus, shellac, wolfram, manganese ore, opium for morphia, etc. She also contributed on a very large scale to other essential needs, e.g. 5,000,000 tons

of foodstuffs, 2,500,000 tons of oil-seeds—for margarine and lubricants—tea and tanned hides, which provided two-thirds of the uppers of all the boots of the British Army. As regards manufactured articles, practically all the railway material for Mesopotamia and Palestine, including 300,000 tons of steel supplied by Messrs. Tata's iron and steel works, came from India, while her cotton-mills supplied khaki drill at the rate of 20,000,000 yards a year.

The economic effects of the war were much the same as in other countries. As elsewhere, it brought wealth to a certain class and generally benefited the agriculturists. But by increasing the cost of the necessities of life it bore heavily on the wage-earning classes and those who had to live on small investments and pensions. A considerable increase in wages became inevitable, as also in the salaries of poorly paid Government servants, while further to alleviate the situation exports of grain foods were controlled. Unfortunately the seasons immediately following were bad, and the poorer classes derived proportionately less benefit from the increase in wages. A general wave of unrest spread through the main industrial centres, manifesting itself in a series of strikes on the railways and in the mills.

During the post-war period India's external trade has experienced remarkable vicissitudes. Though the export of food grains was severely restricted, so great was the demand for Indian produce that in the year 1919–20 the total value of exports reached the record figure of 312 crores. By the spring of 1920 the inability of the European countries to pay for the goods they required became increasingly clear, and the effective demand for Indian merchandise fell away, with the result that there was a severe drop in prices. The figures, owing to the change in values, afford little index of this decline in demand, but it is estimated that on the basis of the declared values in 1913–14 the merchandise exported in 1920–21 would have amounted approximately to 172 crores, as compared with 244 in the former year. Similar conditions affected the import trade. The stocks of imported goods had been generally depleted during the war, and orders on a large scale were placed on the basis of a 2*s*. rupee immediately after the Armistice. Before the goods could be delivered in India both prices and the rupee had fallen heavily, and the merchant in India found himself faced with a serious loss. The market thus became flooded with goods for which there was little immediate prospect of sale.

Such a sudden reversal of conditions in both the import and export trade naturally caused great commercial and financial difficulty, and the following year was marked by a severe depression of trade. The latest figures, viz. those for the year 1922–23, show some change for the better. There was a favourable balance of trade of 28 crores, as against an adverse balance of 31 in the preceding year, and more normal conditions seem to be returning.

IV

MINES AND MINERALS

The history of the Indian mineral industry may be divided into three rather indistinct periods. The first of these comprises the time when the country was self-supporting, and produced the few metallic and chemical products which a community, chiefly agricultural, required. At that time the native-made copper and brass, iron and steel were alone utilised for the manufacture of domestic implements, the weapons of war and the chase.

The second period gradually dawned through the shortening of the sea-route from Europe, the consequent lowering of freights, and the spread of railways in India. All these combined to enable the foreign manufacturer, both of metals and chemicals, to land his wares in the ports and bazaars, and to overcome the feeble resistance offered by the home-made article. This period witnessed the extinction of some of the ancient industries and the decay of the rest, while it resulted in almost exclusive attention being paid to the export of raw materials.

The third period commenced with the quickening of Indian industrial life during the last decade or so; and it is now beginning to show signs of steady advancement to a stage reached in countries technically more highly developed, when the multifarious materials required by large groups of industries are manufactured more economically locally than they can be imported from abroad. Iron and steel manufacture has been thoroughly established on permanent foundations, and the day will not be far distant when India will be self-contained as regards iron and probably exporting it on a large scale to other countries. Lead and silver ores are smelted in Burma, and sufficient lead is available to free India from any necessity of importing the metal. Refined copper is being

produced, though here there is much room for expansion. India now makes the ferro-manganese required for her own steel industry. These instances, though by no means complete, will show the trend of development in this third and most interesting period.

For many years there has been a marked increase in the output of Indian minerals. The progress is indicated in the table given below, which shows the production of those minerals for which regular and fairly reliable returns are available.

OUTPUT AND VALUE OF MINERALS FOR WHICH RETURNS OF PRODUCTION ARE AVAILABLE

Mineral.		1914.	1918.	1919.
Coal	£	3,907,380	6,017,215	6,746,171
	tons	16,464,263	20,722,493	22,628,037
Gold	£	2,338,355	2,060,152	1,504,026
	oz.	607,388	536,118	507,260
Petroleum	£	958,565	1,131,904	1,222,871
	gals.	259,342,710	286,585,011	305,651,816
Manganese ore[1] . . .	£	775,220	1,481,735	1,030,887
	tons	603,754	517,953	537,995
Salt[2]	£	483,289	1,645,195	1,215,681
	tons	1,348,225	1,856,696	1,891,138
Saltpetre	£	272,462	589,190	314,165
	tons	15,545	24,740	17,550
Wolfram	£	175,150	726,681	359,696
	tons	2,243	4,431	3,576
Mica[3]	£	237,310	625,741	575,632
	cwt.	40,502	60,075	59,098
Lead	£	202,330	450,477	445,761
	tons	10,563	19,115	19,090
Silver	£	26,896	295,696	324,728
	oz.	236,446	1,971,783	2,164,853
Tin Ore and Tin . . .	£	34,957	134,635	160,766
	cwt.	6,239	17,621	29,633
Monazite	£	41,411	58,819	40,475
	tons	1,185	2,117	2,037
Iron Ore	tons	441,574	492,669	563,750

[1] Export Values. [2] Prices without duty. [3] Exports.

Estimated total value of minerals of which returns are available:

1914	£9,945,636
1918	£15,634,045
1919	£14,457,845

(NOTE.—The value of the rupee is taken throughout at 1*s.* 4*d.*)

In the following pages the chief mineral resources of India are briefly sketched out. Limits of space preclude the mention of any but the most important of these. There are a number

of others such as alum, antimony, barytes, bismuth, corundum, graphite, nickel, phosphates, steatite, and tin, of relatively smaller importance.

Bauxite: Bauxite is the main source of aluminium, and extensive deposits have been found in the Central Provinces, in Chota Nagpur, Madras and Bombay.

Borax: The borax lakes stretch from the Puga valley in Kashmir into Tibet proper. The crude material comes thence into the Punjab or the United Provinces. It is an old-established trade, mentioned as far back as 1563.

Chromite: The Baluchistan deposits are in the Zhob and Pishin valleys. Others are worked in Mysore and Orissa. The mineral is the source of ferro-chrome used in the manufacture of chrome steel.

Coal: The history of Indian coal-mining commences in 1777, in Bengal. An output of 1,000,000 tons was raised about 1880.

In 1919 it had risen to 22,500,000 tons.

The mines find work for over 200,000 persons. Indian coal is the energy of India's industrial existence, and of the total quantity raised more than 95 per cent. is consumed in the country by railways, jute and cotton mills, blast furnaces, workshops, factories and so on.

The Gondwana coal-fields yield 98 per cent. of the production, and by far the greater proportion of this comes from Raniganj and Jherria, two fields in the Damuda valley (Bengal and Bihar). The first has an area of 500 square miles and is 120 miles north-west of Calcutta. Jherria is 150 square miles in extent and 16 miles beyond Raniganj. There are about 650 collieries in these two fields. Other important coal-fields in the same group are Giridih, Bokara, Ramgarh, North and South Karanpura and Daltonganj. Another belt of coal-fields occurs in the Godavari basin, with important collieries at Ballarpur in the Chanda district of the Central Provinces, and Singareni in Haidarabad. Of the Mahanadi fields, but two are as yet exploited—Sombalpur, or Raigarh-Hingir (Central Provinces), and Umaria in Rewa.

The Mohpani and Pench valley coal-fields are close to the Satpura Hills in the Central Provinces.

Coal of Tertiary age is mined on a large scale at Makum in the Lakhimpur district of Assam; at Khost (Baluchistan); at Jhelum, Punjab; and at Bikanir in Rajputana.

Copper: In the Singhbhum and Dhalbhum districts of Bihar and Orissa there is a copper-bearing belt 80 miles long.

Worked in the unknown past by the ancients, it is now being developed on modern lines. Large ore reserves exist at the Rakha mines, where smelting and refining of copper was recently started.

Gold : Hundreds of gold workings exist, especially in Mysore, while gold-washing in the sands of rivers is a widespread occupation. The average annual production of gold in India over the past five years was worth over £2,000,000, and 94 per cent. of this came from Mysore. All the productive mines are on one "reef," which averages about 4 feet in thickness and can be traced for only 3 miles, yet it has yielded gold to the value of over £50,000,000 since 1887. The mines are now about 5,000 feet deep, and it is estimated that they will continue to yield for another twenty or thirty years. Power for the Kolar gold-fields is obtained from the Cauvery falls, 92 miles away. The same group of gold-bearing rocks recurs in other parts of India, where it has been worked from time to time. Few of these workings have proved successful when exploited by modern methods.

Iron : Until comparatively recent times the manufacture of iron and steel in India, which dates from a remote antiquity, was a widespread industry. But failure attended all the earlier attempts to graft European methods on to the native processes, and the successful manufacture of iron and steel on a large scale in India is an event of comparatively recent times. There are now two large ironworks and one large steelworks in existence, at Kulti in Bengal and Jamshedpur in Bihar. A third set of ironworks is under erection at Asansol (Bengal), and a fourth at Benkipur in Mysore. There are three great groups of iron-ore occurrences, the most important being found in association with certain old rocks of Peninsular India. They are abundant in Singhbhum, and in the Keonjhar and other states of Orissa. Here enormous quantities of high-grade ore have been found ; indeed, India possesses reserves which compare in quality and quantity with those of almost any other country in the world.

Lead, Silver and Zinc : The great lead-silver-zinc ore deposit of Bawdwin is situated in Tawnpeng in the Northern Shan States of Burma, about 600 miles by rail from Rangoon. It was worked for centuries by the Chinese, who extracted the silver and finally abandoned the mines in 1868. About 1912 the real riches of the deposit were laid bare by European exploration. Very large quantities of high-grade ore have been proved, and lead-smelting with silver-refining are now

established industries. The output of metallic lead in 1919 was about 1,600 tons, and of pure silver about 172,000 ounces per month.

Manganese: Indian manganese-ore mining commenced in 1891. In 1907 over 900,000 tons were produced. The output of late years has averaged 570,000 tons annually, and in some years India has been the leading producing country in the world. The ores are used in the preparation of ferro-manganese, an essential commodity for the iron and steel industries. The largest deposits are in the Central Provinces.

Mica: During the past twenty years India has contributed over three-fifths of the world's total output of mica. There are two centres of mining activity, the first in the districts of Monghyr and Hazaribhag in Bihar; while the second, the Nellore zone, is in the east part of the Madras coastal region, and is about 8 or 10 miles broad and 60 miles long. The best grades of the Indian mineral are considered unequalled in the electrical trade. The exports in 1918–19 were nearly 56,000 cwt.

Monazite: Monazite sands occur on the sea-beaches of Travancore, and between Cape Comorin and Quilon there are five major deposits. Two companies extract monazite and export it to the United Kingdom, the United States and France, where the thorium contained in it is recovered as nitrate and used in the manufacture of incandescent gas-mantles. The Indian deposits are the largest in the world, and contain a much greater percentage of thorium than Brazilian monazite, which is its chief competitor. In 1918 over 2,100 tons were produced.

Petroleum: Petroleum is found in Burma, Assam and the Punjab. The productive oil-fields of Burma lie east of the Arakan mountains in the Irrawadi valley, from the Minbu to the Chindwin district. Yenangyang, in the Magwe district, the most famous field, worked for hundreds of years by Burmese diggers, is only 1¼ square miles in extent, and is now covered with machine-drilled wells, some of which are over 3,000 feet deep. Its yield approximates 200,000,000 gallons per annum, and the crude oil is pumped to the refineries at Rangoon through a steel pipe 297 miles long. Farther north, in the Myingyan district, is the promising Singu field, with a production of 93,000,000 gallons per annum. Across the Irrawadi, in the Pakkaku district, is the Yenangyat field, giving about 4,000,000 gallons every year. The yield of the Minbu field is about the same.

From the Chindwin field over 1,000,000 gallons were drawn in 1919.

Oil-springs occur in parts of Assam. The largest field, viz. that at Badarpur in the Cachar district, has an output of 6,500,000 gallons. The smaller, Digboi, yields about 5,500,000 gallons per annum. The only producing field in the Punjab is that of Khaur, 43 miles south-west of Rawalpindi. Drilling was commenced in 1915, and 750,000 gallons were produced in 1918.

Precious Stones: India produces a variety of precious and semi-precious stones. Diamonds are still mined on a small scale in the Panna State. Precious garnets come from Rajputana. The jade-mines are in Burma, while the Burma ruby mines, where the sapphire and spinel are also found, are known throughout the world.

Saltpetre: Saltpetre is extracted from the surface soils collected round the villages of the Gangetic plain. The industry is prosperous during war periods. The output in 1918 was 24,750 tons valued at £589,190.

Silver: Vide *Lead.*

Tungsten: Wolfram, the ore of tungsten, is found over a distance of 700 miles in Burma, from the Southern Shan States to the extreme south of the Mergui district. The Tavoy district is the most important, and out of Burma's total of 17,300 tons for the five years ending 1918, it alone accounted for 14,300 tons. At the outbreak of the war, Burma was the largest wolfram-producing country in the world; but the demand for the mineral stimulated production elsewhere and led to the output of the United States and, later on, of China surpassing that of Burma. In 1917 India produced 4,542 tons, but by 1919 this had fallen to 3,576 tons.

Zinc: Vide *Lead.*

V

RAILWAYS

THE first line opened in India was from Bombay to Kalyan, a distance of thirty-three miles (one of three experimental railways sanctioned in 1849), but railway construction on an ambitious scale really dates from the acceptance by the Court of Directors of the East India Company of the policy laid down in Lord Dalhousie's famous minute of 1853, advocating the construction by guaranteed companies of a series of trunk

lines uniting the various provinces and connecting the trade-centres inland with the principal ports. By the end of 1859 eight companies, with a contemplated mileage of 5,000 and an aggregate guaranteed capital of £52,000,000, had been floated in England, viz. (1) East Indian, (2) Great Indian Peninsula, (3) Madras (now merged partly in the Madras and Southern Mahratta and partly in the South Indian), (4) Bombay, Baroda and Central India, (5) Eastern Bengal, (6) Calcutta and South-Eastern (now merged in the Eastern Bengal Railway), (7) Scind, Punjab and Delhi (now merged in the North-Western), and (8) Great Southern of India (now South Indian) Railways. All these lines have since been acquired by the State, but some are worked for it by companies on a different basis to the old ones.

Each of these companies contracted with the East India Company to construct and manage a specified line in return for the provision of land and the guarantee of interest varying, according to the market rate prevailing when the various contracts were made, from 4½ to 5 per cent. on the capital outlay. Half of any surplus profit earned in any half-year was to be retained by Government to be applied to repay advances made under its guarantee, and while the railways were held on ninety-nine-year leases, the State reserved the right to take over any line after twenty-five or fifty years upon terms calculated to represent the company's interest therein, against a corresponding right of the latter to surrender and receive payment of its capital at par. As above indicated, this option was eventually exercised. The railways constructed on these terms, though of great political and military value, imposed in some cases a considerable burden upon Indian revenues, as the expectations in regard to profits were not in all instances realised owing to heavy initial outlay incurred in the construction of lines on the standard gauge, uneconomical alignment and alteration of routes, while later the fall in the exchange value of the rupee added to the burden of payments, which were fixed in sterling. The original policy was modified in favour of construction under subsidy, but without guarantee, and with a minimum of Government interference, but this attempt to attract capital was a complete failure, and in 1869 it was decided to raise the capital required for railway construction in India by direct State agency and to make working expenditure a charge on current revenues. By the end of 1879, though 6,128 miles had been opened by companies and 2,175 by Government, the Famine Commission, appointed after the

great famine of 1877–78, pointed out that construction was still 5,000 miles short of the mileage needed to secure protection of the country from the consequences of seasonal failure, and that the limit put upon the borrowing powers of the Government for railway purposes hampered progress. It was consequently decided once more to try and attract private capital under guarantee. Although the contract terms offered under the modified guarantee system were less favourable than previously, several companies were formed which have contributed materially to the development of the Indian railway system.

The present general position as regards railways is as follows. At the end of 1920–21 the total mileage was 37,029, and fresh mileage amounting to about 1,800 was under construction or definitely sanctioned. Of the railway system, 26,000 miles belong to the State direct, and 19,000 are under systems belonging to the State but leased to companies.

The standard gauge on Indian railways is 5 feet 6 inches, but in 1870, chiefly for reasons of economy, the metric gauge of 3 feet 3⅜ inches was adopted provisionally for certain new lines, and has since been a permanent feature of the railway system. There are some light railways on small gauges. At the end of 1921 over 18,000 miles were under the broad gauge, about 15,000 under the metre gauge, and the balance chiefly on a 2 foot 6 inch gauge.

At the time railway construction was commenced doubt was expressed whether local customs and caste restrictions would permit much railway travelling. Such fears were soon belied. Fares were low and people rapidly availed themselves of the opportunity to visit places of pilgrimage and relations, and to use the railway for business purposes. In 1919–20 the State lines, which cover about seven-tenths of the total mileage, carried over 500,000,000 passengers for an average distance per person of 40 miles, and at an average fare per mile of a shade over a farthing. In the same year about 90,000,000 tons of goods were carried, with an average lead of 232 miles, at a ton-mile rate of a little over one-third of a penny.

Railway finance has already been alluded to in the preceding chapters, and, as there remarked, these properties have become a lucrative source of revenue. The total expenditure on State-owned lines, up to March 31, 1920, has been about £280,000,000, and some £50,000,000 more may be added for other lines outside the State system. In 1913–14 £12,000,000, which was then a record, was provided in the budget for capital

expenditure on State-owned lines, and similar provision was made in 1914–15. It was of course impossible to maintain such provision during the war; and the military demand in the East placed a most severe strain on the Indian system. Not only did ordinary replacement cease, but in 1917–18 alone 420 miles of metre-gauge line were dismantled in India and sent to Mesopotamia and elsewhere. Altogether over 200 locomotives, 5,500 vehicles and 2,000 track miles of rails were supplied by the Indian railways to the war. Thus not only was development stopped and maintenance checked, but resources were drained. Control of traffic was necessitated in India, and transport caused difficulties throughout 1920 and 1921. Since the war, however, efforts have been made to cope with these deficiencies, and the aggregate provision for the two years 1920–21 and 1921–22 has been over 40 crores.

VI

FINANCE

In the historical portion it has been shown that, in the early days of British rule in India, the three Presidencies of Bengal, Madras and Bombay were independently administered, even to the extent of maintaining separate armies of their own.

The introduction of a central system of finance dates from 1833, when by an Act of Parliament the administration of the finances of British India was centralised in the hands of the Government of India. By the Act of 1858, which transferred the governance of India from the Company to the Crown, the superintendence of the revenues and expenditure of India was vested in the Secretary of State in Council, the Government of India being regarded, in respect of the powers left to them, as merely the Secretary of State's delegates.

By the system thus created the provinces lost all power of separate taxation or borrowing, and were financed by grants made each year by the Governor-General-in-Council, which were earmarked for specific purposes and could be used for no other. The Government of India, in turn, were under the control of the Secretary of State in all important matters relating to alterations in taxation, borrowing, and all new departures in fiscal policy generally. Modifications into this system were from time to time introduced, being mainly in the direction of granting to the provinces more or less independent

resources and affording them an opportunity of deriving benefit from economies effected, or development of existing sources of revenue. These adjustments, however, in no way placed the provinces on a federal basis. Special revenues were merely assigned by the Government of India and were shown along with the corresponding expenditure in the Central Government's budget, while the budget of each province had to be approved by the Government of India.

Such a system was clearly incompatible with the due exercise of their functions by popularly elected councils, and would inevitably lead to recurrent friction between these bodies and the Central Government as regard the assignment of revenues to particular provinces. Accordingly, with the introduction of the recent political reforms, extensive alterations have been carried out in the domain of finance.

Briefly, a separation has been made between Imperial and provincial finance, and the Indian revenues have been divided between the Central and Local Governments. The following are the main sources of revenue and the lines of division :

Central	*Provincial*
Customs	Land Revenue
Income-tax	Excise (spirits, drugs)
Railways	Irrigation
Opium	Stamps (judicial and non-judicial)
Salt	Forests
Post and Telegraphs	Registration

In addition, the Provincial Governments have been given powers of taxation within spheres limited so as not to affect sources of revenue classed as Imperial. They are also able to borrow on the security of their revenues, either through the Government of India or independently, and some have already negotiated loans of considerable extent on the local markets for works of improvement, such as irrigation or city development schemes.

To meet the loss so sustained by the Imperial Government, the provinces have been called upon to pay an annual contribution, amounting to about a crore of rupees. This, however, is of the nature of a temporary expedient, and a time is looked to when the Imperial revenues proper will suffice for Imperial needs and the special revenue contribution will be gradually done away with. When this is attained, the provinces will enjoy financial autonomy within certain limitations inseparable from a federal status. Even now, the immediate outcome

is that the provinces collectively are better off by about 11 crores a year than they were under the arrangements previously in force.

One result following from the division of the Indian revenues is that provincial receipts and expenditure no longer figure in the Imperial budgets, which merely include balancing transactions, such as the lump contributions from provincial to Imperial. This change appears in the budget statements of 1921–22, when, for the first time since 1833, the provincial accounts were omitted from the revenue and expenditure statements of the Government of India. The total heads of subsequent years show a material decline which, in the main, is not due to decrease of income or reduction in expenditure, but to the elimination of provincial items of account.

We may now proceed to the examination of the financial position of India during the recent years, and for this purpose may commence with a table showing total receipts and expenditure during the ten years ending 1922–23 (the Indian official year, like the British, begins on April 1). The figures up to 1921 relate to total transactions, Imperial and provincial; from that date the figures are those of the Central Government only. It has been usual for a good many years past to set forth the total Indian revenue and expenditure in pounds sterling, converted at the rate of 15 rupees to the pound; but, in view of the variations in Indian exchange and the uncertainties as regards the future, these transactions are now exhibited in rupees. The same course is taken in the statement that follows, giving the results in crores of rupees to one place of decimals. (A *crore* [10,000,000] of rupees at 15 rupees to the pound may be taken as corresponding roughly to £667,000; a *lakh* = 100,000 rupees.)

Year.	Revenue.	Expenditure.
	(crores)	(crores)
1913–14	127·8	124·3
1914–15	121·7	124·4
1915–16	126·6	128·4
1916–17	147·1	135·4
1917–18	169·0	156·9
1918–19	184·9	190·6
1919–20	195·6	219·2
1920–21	206·1	231·2
1921–22 (revised estimate)	108·9	141·9
1922–23 (Budget estimate)	133·2	142·3

It will be seen that in the first year of the period taken there was a material surplus, representing the prosperity which India had enjoyed prior to the war. In 1914–15 and the following year there were deficits owing to circumstances connected with the war which dislocated India's external trade and affected customs and railway receipts and, later on, owing to the expansion of military outlay for the defence of the Indian frontier. It was consequently necessary in 1916–17, and again in 1917–18, in order to meet the growing charges, and, in the latter year, to provide interest on the borrowing required for a war gift of £100,000,000 presented to the Home Government, to impose fresh taxation. This took the form of an increased income-tax with a super-tax in respect of large incomes, an enhancement of the customs tariff on imported goods, and a surcharge on railway goods traffic.

Thanks to these measures and the prosperity of the country arising from good agricultural seasons and the demand set up by war conditions for essential products which India could supply, the years 1916–17 and 1917–18 showed large surpluses. From this time onward, however, the situation rapidly deteriorated. The year 1918–19, in which a surplus of four crores had been estimated, actually ended with a deficit of six crores. The close of the Great War was almost immediately followed by the Afghan War, which threw a large and unexpected burden on India. Mainly owing to the cost of this war and synchronous troubles on the frontier, there was a still larger deficit in 1919–20, amounting to 24 crores. Forecasting the results of the year 1920–21, the Finance Minister again budgeted for a small surplus ; but for a third year in succession disappointment followed, the deficit on this occasion being 26 crores. The main reason which led to the excess over estimates was the extension of operations in Waziristan towards the close of the year.

These deficits were financed for the time being by drawing on balances, increase of the floating debt and other temporary expedients. But in 1921–22 it became necessary to regularise the situation by further increases of taxation. With the assistance of enhanced customs duties, income- and super-tax, and with increases in the postal changes and rates on railway goods traffic, it was hoped that the revenue would so far exceed expenditure as to leave a small surplus.

Unfortunately the country was beginning to feel the effects of the world-wide trade depression. The export trade was seriously affected and, as the demand for Indian products fell

away, exchange crumbled rapidly. These conditions reacted on the revenue, and the receipts from the principal sources of Imperial revenue, customs and railways, showed a marked decline; while the depreciation of the rupee threw an additional burden on the revenues in the payment of home charges. Rising prices necessitated an enhancement of wages, the main weight of which fell on the State as the largest employer of labour. The cost of coal and plant of all description rose in proportion, and the combined effect of lower receipts and heavier expenditure was completely to upset earlier forecasts of the closing balance. The later accounts of the year ending March 1922 showed an estimated deficit of 33 crores. To balance income and expenditure, some further increases of taxation were introduced, mainly on the lines indicated above, and drastic measures are being undertaken to reduce expenditure, in particular military expenses.

The main heads of revenue will be gathered from the following statement, which compares the actuals of 1913–14, the last full year before the war, with the estimated budget of 1922–23, as passed by the Legislative Council:

REVENUES OF INDIA (IN INDIA AND ENGLAND)

(IN CRORES OF RUPEES)

Head.	1913-14.	Estimate 1922-23.
Land Revenue	32·1	(provincialised)
Opium	2·4	3·0
Salt	5·2	6·8
Stamps	8·0	—
Excise (spirits, drugs, etc.)	13·3	—
Customs	11·3	45·4
Income-tax	2·9	22·1
Forests	3·3	—
Interest	2·0	—
Posts and Telegraphs (net receipts)	5·4	1·7
Railways (less working expenses)	26·4	31·1
Irrigation	7·1	—
Military receipts	2·1	5·5
Currency, mint and exchange	—	3·2
Contributions from Provincial to Central Government	—	9·2
Other heads	6·3	5·2
Total	127·8	133·2

The principal sources of Imperial revenue are now, in order, customs, railways and income-tax.

The customs revenue is derived from—

(1) A general *ad valorem* tariff, with somewhat lesser rates

for certain articles, such as food-grains, machinery, agricultural implements, railway plant, and iron and steel products.

(2) Special and higher rates of taxation on articles such as arms, sugar, petroleum, tobacco, salt and matches.

(3) Export duties on rice, jute, tea, and hides and skins, the last-mentioned being subject to a rebate of two-thirds in respect of exports within the Empire.

The increase in customs revenue between the two years taken for comparison is due mainly to enhancements of the tariff. In 1913–14 the general import duty was 5 per cent. *ad valorem*, a material exception being the duty on imported cotton goods, which was fixed at 3½ per cent. only, counterbalanced by an equivalent excise duty on the products of the Indian mills. In respect of other articles subject to the import tariff, save in the special case of European liquors produced locally, there was no such countervailing excise, and the exception made in case of cotton was resented as a concession to Lancashire agitation. In 1916–17 the general tariff was raised to 7½ per cent., and there were considerable increases in the import duties on liquors and tobacco, while in 1917–18 the import duty on cotton was raised to the general tariff level, the excise duty remaining at the previous 3½ per cent. In order to balance the Budget for 1921–22, the general tariff, including cotton, was raised to 11 per cent., the cotton excise still remaining at 3½ per cent., and further increases were made in the special duties on liquors, tobacco and sugar. Articles of luxury, such as motor-cars, films and jewellery, etc., have also been placed in a special category of taxation.

An export duty on rice, which comes mainly from Burma, is an old-standing impost. In 1916–17 export duties were also levied for the first time on jute and tea, and increased in the following year, while in 1919–20 exports of raw hides and skins were also taxed. The latter duty, it may be added, was imposed not for revenue purposes but to afford encouragement to Indian tanners, and from that point of view may be considered as partaking of a protective character. Otherwise, the imports duties have been imposed for revenue and not protective purposes.

The State owns most of the railways in India, working some direct as State lines, and leasing others out to companies, who obtain, as a rule, a guarantee of a certain return on their capital while sharing the surplus profits with Government. The receipt side of the Budget shows the net receipts from State lines—i.e. gross receipts less working expenses—and the ex-

penditure side the interest charges on the railway portion of the debt; while payments to and from companies figure under expenditure or receipts as the case may be. The railway transactions were for a long period a source of net loss to the Government of India, though this was set off by the economic development they helped to encourage. For more than twenty years, however, railways have yielded in most years an expanding profit and were a great stand-by during the financial situation set up by the war. In 1913–14 the net railway receipts (gross takings less working expenses) amounted to 26½ crores, and the interest and other charges shown on the expenditure side to 19·2 crores, leading to a resultant surplus of 7·3 crores. At one time during the war the net receipts rose to as much as 37½ crores. But from 1919–20 onward they have been very fluctuating, owing to increased working expenses and higher prices of coal; the main item of increase being in regard to pay of the staff, which has more than counterbalanced the enhanced railway rates.

Income-tax was formerly levied at a uniform rate of 5 pies per rupee (about 6*d.* in the pound) on incomes above Rs. 2,000 (£133), and 4 pies per rupee on those between Rs. 1,000 and Rs. 2,000; but in 1916–17 the tax was graduated and raised to a maximum of 1 anna in the rupee (or about 1*s.* 3*d.* in the pound), while in the following year a graduated super-tax, which might run up to 3 annas in the rupee, was imposed on incomes in excess of Rs. 50,000 a year. The latter was subsequently converted into a flat rate of 1 anna in the rupee on the total of a company's income in excess of Rs. 50,000. With effect from 1921–22, the ordinary income-tax has been raised to a maximum of 16 pies per rupee (or 1*s.* 8*d.* in the pound), and the super-tax to a maximum of 4 annas in the rupee (5*s.* in the pound); on the other hand, in 1920–21 the limit of taxable income was raised to Rs. 2,000 a year. It should be explained, too, that the income-tax is not levied on agricultural products, as these are considered to be adequately dealt with by the land-revenue assessments.

The apportionment of funds has left the income from Land Revenue, Forests and Irrigation with the provinces, but some portion of the receipts from these heads returns indirectly to the Central Government in the form of the provincial contribution. These, like the railways, are not taxation heads proper and, in case of Irrigation and Forests, represent the income derived from State properties, and, in case of the Land Revenue, the State's ultimate share in the ownership of the

land. The State demand on the land was permanently fixed over a century ago in the greater part of the provinces of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, and in parts of Madras and the United Provinces. Elsewhere it is periodically revised by land settlements, the usual period of which is about thirty years, and is supposed theoretically to amount to one-half of the net agricultural profits. Modern assessments are, however, on a much easier basis. The incidence of land revenue may be taken, on a rough average, at 11*d.* per acre in the permanently settled tracts, which now represents about one-fifth of the rental, and at 2*s.* per acre in the temporarily settled tracts. The receipts from Forests and Irrigation, which are now provincialised heads, are dealt with in another chapter.

The main heads of expenditure in India and England are shown in the following table:

EXPENDITURE CHARGED TO REVENUE OF INDIA

(IN CRORES OF RUPEES)

Head.	1913-14.	1922-23 (estimated).
Direct demands on revenue (refunds, charges for collection, etc.)	14·0	5·5
Interest on ordinary debt	2·3	15·2
Posts and Telegraphs	4·9	0·9
Salaries and expenses of civil departments	27·0	9·7
Miscellaneous civil charges	8·1	4·0
Railways (interest and miscellaneous charges)	19·2	25·9
Irrigation (working expenses and interest charges)	5·3	—
Other public works	10·5	1·6
Military services	31·9	67·7
Currency, mint and exchange	—	10·8
Other heads	1·1	1·0
Total	124·3	142·3

The separation of the accounts of the Central Government and the provinces explains the apparent decline under the heads of direct demands on the revenue and the expenses of civil departments, the provinces being now responsible for the collection of their revenue and paying of civil officials. So far from there having been any actual decrease, by 1920–21, the last year of centralised accounts, the direct demands had risen to 22·2 crores and the expenses of the civil departments to 44·9. They have been affected by the necessity of the revision of salaries and establishments, and extensive educational developments. The provinces now undertake their own public works, including irrigation. The change in the system

of maintaining the accounts has brought some of the miscellaneous civil charges under the head of exchange.

The increase under ordinary interest charges is due to heavier borrowings, and the higher rates that have to be paid on loans. Before the war the ordinary rate at which India could borrow was 3½ per cent. The most serious item is that of military charges. In 1920–21 the total expenditure rose to 88 crores, largely on account of frontier troubles. In 1922–23 these operations were still proving expensive. The strength of India's post-war army is somewhat lower than it was in 1913–14, but the cost has become very much higher, owing to the creation of new services, such as the Royal Air Force and Mechanical Transport, and to necessary improvements in the pay and amenities of the troops.

In conclusion, it may be confidently said that in normal times the revenues of India are steady and progressive and her financial position good. For the past few years she has been suffering, like other countries, from financial embarrassments which are the aftermath of the war, which may be summarised briefly as a rise in prices (involving a large increase in salaries), military charges and exchange difficulties.

VII

DEBT, CURRENCY AND EXCHANGE

At the end of March 1922 the debt of India stood at about £224,000,000 in sterling and 405 crores in rupees, or in all about £494,000,000, taking rupees at 15 to the pound. Of the rupee debt some 278½ crores represented debt of a permanent, or long-term, character, 40¼ crores short-term loans and 88¼ crores Treasury bills, of which, however, over 46 crores had not been issued to the public, but were held in the paper currency reserve, a matter which will be dealt with later on.

The greater portion of the debt is of what is termed a productive character, that is, it has been incurred for railways and irrigation works, whose returns for a long time past have been sufficient not merely to defray the interest charges on the debt, but to afford a surplus to the taxpayer. In 1915 the position was set out by the Finance Member of the Viceroy's Council as follows: "Out of a total debt equivalent to £274,000,000 outstanding at the end of March 1914, only about £13,000,000 represented ordinary or unproductive debt. The

annual interest on the latter was £750,000 only, and on the productive debt about £8,500,000, so that our total interest charges amounted to some £9,250,000. Railways and irrigation works in the same year yielded us a return of £15,250,000. Thus, we had still left some £6,000,000 of clear revenue from our great capital undertakings, after meeting interest charges on our entire public debt."

Since then the situation has undergone a material change, mainly owing to borrowings for purposes connected with the Great War, and subsequent operations in Afghanistan and on the frontier.

Before the war the loans raised in India were not of a large character, and the highest level in any one year was 5 crores. The shutting-off of the home market owing to the war, and the heavy expenditure which the Government of India had to undertake on behalf of the Home Government in India, the ultimate repayment of which took place in London, led to very large appeals to the Indian market, while the old method of borrowing by long-term loans was largely superseded by short-term issues and by Treasury Bills. The result has been that a much larger proportion of the debt of India is held by her own people than was formerly the case, and future borrowings will take place so far as possible in India itself. They will, however, need to be supplemented on occasion by appeals to the London money market; in 1921 such a loan was floated in London for the first time after several years and was at once covered, while a larger loan has been successfully floated in India itself, the object of the latter being to convert or repay short-term obligations.

Up to March 31, 1920, the total capital expenditure on railways owned by the State covering some 26,000 miles had been about 523 crores. As regards irrigation, the total capital outlay up to the same period on productive and protective major works was about 69 crores of rupees. The latter has now been provincialised, and the loans since raised have become an obligation on the provinces concerned. The condition of the railways after the war, during which new plant was difficult to obtain and urgent extensions had to be postponed, has called for large additional capital expenditure which is being provided mainly by fresh loans.

Outside the debt figures discussed above there are other unfounded debt obligations of the Government of India, including Post Office cash certificates, which were introduced during the war on the analogy of the Post Office Savings certificates in

England, Post Office Savings Bank deposits, various judicial and departmental deposits, balances of service funds and so forth, amounting to over £50,000,000. Of this, the Savings Bank balances account for some £36,000,000. On the other hand the Government of India had lent some £14,000,000 to Indian States, local bodies, agriculturists, etc.

Questions relating to currency and exchange bulk largely in Indian finance and require some detailed explanation. The British currency system in India was founded on that of the Moghal Emperors, whose heritage was gradually taken over, and had as its basis a coin known as a rupee. With the decay of the Moghal Empire the coinage became greatly depreciated, but this was remedied as British rule became established, and in 1835 a uniform coinage for India was introduced, based on a rupee of a weight of 180 grains and containing 165 grains of pure silver, a standard which has since been adhered to. The rupee was, and is, legal tender without limit, and its weight, 1 tola (a little less than half an ounce) is also the unit on which the Indian standard of weights are based. Each rupee is worth 16 annas, and other silver coins were until recently the 8-anna piece, which like the rupee was legal tender without limit, and the 4-anna and 2-anna pieces, which like the copper coins were legal tender only up to 1 rupee. In 1906 the 1-anna nickel piece was introduced, while more recently nickel pieces of 2 annas, 4 annas and 8 annas have been issued to replace corresponding silver coins, all these being legal tender up to 1 rupee only.

The supplementing of specie coins by a paper currency was of slow and gradual growth in India. In the first instance the Presidency Banks of Calcutta, Bombay and Madras were permitted to issue notes payable on demand, but the circulation of these was practically confined to the cities in which they were issued. In 1861 the present note system was initiated; the privilege of note issue was withdrawn from the Presidency Banks and made a State function. For the purpose of this system India was divided into various currency circles, and notes are only encashable, as a right, at the headquarters of each of these circles, though, as a matter of convenience, they are cashed also, so far as circumstances permit, at the local treasuries. The note circulation began, and at first progressed, in a small way, as was natural in a country which had grievous experience of political cataclysms and where the hoarding instinct was, in consequence, strongly developed; in the year 1900 it was still only 28¾ crores.

The encashment of notes was provided for by the establishment of a paper-currency reserve, which has played a great part in the problems of recent years, and which was constituted on the English system, i.e. a certain amount of the reserve, fixed by legislation from time to time, was permitted to be held by Government paper; the remainder had to be the exact equivalent in rupees or silver bullion of the balance of the note issue.

In the chequered history of Indian currency certain definite periods stand out with marked distinctness.

The first of these is from the introduction of a uniform coinage in 1835 up to 1873, when the fall in the gold price of silver began to be felt. During the second period from 1873 onward, the fluctuations in the value of the rupee caused the most serious embarrassment both to the trade and finances of the country and, after protracted deliberations, measures, which in the long-run proved fairly successful, were taken to stabilise it. And finally there was the war period, when an entirely new set of conditions came into operation.

During the first of these periods the normal sterling value of the rupee was more or less constant at 2*s*., that is, it was treated as the equivalent to the British florin.

As regards international exchange, the position was, and still is, that in normal years India exports considerably more than she imports, and there is consequently a large debt owing her year by year in London. *Primâ facie*, this would have to be defrayed by the export of specie to India, but on the other hand India, as represented by her Government, has to make remittance to London to meet what are known as the "home charges"—interest on her sterling debt, expenditure in connection with the purchase of stores, material, pensions, etc. These were defrayed by the Secretary of State selling rupee drafts on the Indian treasuries. These sales were to the highest bidders; but the sterling amounts obtained could not normally exceed the cost of procuring silver and remitting it to India for coinage, since that was an ever-open alternative.

Up to 1873 the system had worked easily and smoothly: additions to the coinage and note issue took place automatically on presentation of bullion at the mints to be exchanged for rupees or notes, and the import of gold and silver was left to private enterprise. The Secretary of State's council drafts were merely for the purpose of meeting his home charges, and trade was left to make its own arrangements for the remittance of specie to meet its remaining obligations.

But about 1873 trouble began as a result of the fall in the value of silver as compared with gold and, in consequence, the rupee exchange kept dropping until the average rate for 1892–93 was only about 15*d.* This depreciation not only introduced the greatest uncertainty into trade transactions, but dislocated the finances of the State by greatly increasing the burden of liquidating home charges.

It was consequently decided in 1893 that the Indian mints should be closed to the free coinage of silver, and that this should be undertaken only on behalf of the Government. The object was, of course, to enhance the exchange value of the rupee by giving it an artificial premium, for the settlement of India's trade balance would now have to take place mainly through the Secretary of State's council drawings, the old alternative method of sending silver bullion to India for coinage being no longer available. It was hoped that, with these measures and by refraining from fresh coinage, the exchange value of the rupee would be gradually forced up to 1*s.* 4*d.*, the permanent standard to be aimed at.

By 1898–99 this goal had been attained, and the rupee, though its bullion value was only about 10*d.*, had been screwed up to an exchange value of 1*s.* 4*d.*, which it was to retain, with minor oscillations, for nearly twenty years.

In 1899 the policy adopted was further developed, and sovereigns and half-sovereigns, which had been receivable in payment of Government dues since 1893, were declared legal tender to an unlimited extent; while provision was made for the renewal of rupee coinage at the discretion of Government. To guard against the risk of a turn in the tide making the rupee issues redundant, and thus weighing down exchange, the profit on coinage, i.e. the difference between the actual cost of turning out rupees and their 1*s.* 4*d.* value, was credited to a special fund, styled the gold-standard reserve, to be used when necessary to maintain exchange by the issue of gold. This gold-standard reserve, whose holdings were recently about £38,000,000, mainly in short-term British Government securities, was constituted in 1901, while the paper-currency reserve, previously referred to, now includes gold deposited in London as well as in India.

The system thus initiated was in effect a sort of local bimetallism. It is somewhat confusing, as is sometimes done, to speak of its reducing the rupee to the position of a token coin, for the essence of an ordinary token coinage, such as the British silver pieces, is that it is only legal tender up to a very

limited amount, whereas the rupee's legal-tender functions are unlimited.

The system was tested and, on the whole, emerged successfully through a difficult period in 1907 and 1908, when a world monetary stringency, aggravated by a failure of crops in India, seriously threatened exchange. Matters ran smoothly after this till the war, and fresh rupee coinage, which had become necessary from 1900 up to the crisis of 1907, was resumed on a large scale in 1912. During the fifteen years ending with 1913–14 the net absorption of rupees by the public in India, which had to be met by fresh coinage, amounted to about 90 crores. At the same time there was a large import of gold into India. Most of the sovereigns thus imported found their way primarily into the paper-currency reserve in exchange for rupees or notes; but a material portion was subsequently absorbed by the public. Thus, in the twelve years ending with March 1913 this absorption for all purposes—melting, hoarding and circulation—amounted to £60,000,000, and in the same period the gold held in the paper-currency reserve in India had expanded from £5,750,000 to £19,500,000. Though never very popular, there was a considerable use of gold as currency, but rather as a substitute for notes than actual rupees.

The first two years of the war brought about some dislocation of trade owing to stoppage of relations with enemy countries, but in the three following years the growing demand for Indian products and the curtailment of imports resulting from war conditions brought the average excess of Indian exports over imports to nearly £60,000,000 a year. Internally the country was prosperous: new trades were springing up, existing factories were working at full pressure, and the enhanced price of agricultural produce brought wealth to the countryside. But the Government of India, which was taking an increasing share in financing military operations in the East, found the greatest difficulty in meeting the liabilities it had undertaken. Repayments being made by His Majesty's Government to the Secretary of State for India in London, circumstances precluded his remitting more than a small portion out to India in the shape of silver purchases. A situation was thus reached in which the Indian home balances were very large, while those in India were subject to constant strain and diminution.

To meet the demands on the treasury, money was borrowed locally on an unprecedented scale. But in spite of these and other temporary measures, such as the prohibition of the melting of specie and of private import and export of gold

and silver, with the issue of small notes for 2½ and 1 rupee, the position kept on deteriorating; and in the first part of 1918 India was in grave danger of having to declare inconvertibility, which would have been a most serious disaster, politically as well as economically. The danger was happily averted by special arrangements made with the United States, by which large supplies of silver stored in the American currency vaults were made available for India. From that time onward the Indian rupee balances were gradually built up again. For example, the return of the paper-currency reserve for January 1921 shows that, out of a total of over 168 crores of notes, 92 crores are covered by metallic holdings.

Subsequent difficulties have been in connection with the exchange value of the rupee. In August 1917 the rising price of silver, which had reached 46*d.* per ounce (whereas the highest level attained in 1914 was 27¾*d.*) rendered it necessary to cut loose the rupee from its now traditional 1*s.* 4*d.* mooring, and to raise the price of the Secretary of State's council bills to 1*s.* 5*d.*, a figure which had to be further raised to 1*s.* 6*d.* in April 1918. Later, the price of silver, in regard to the production of which America is the main factor, was largely enhanced by the depreciation of sterling exchange as compared with dollars, and in 1919 the Secretary of State had gradually to raise his minimum rate to figures which progressed from 1*s.* 10*d.* to 2*s.* 4*d.* per rupee.

The inconveniences caused by these constant changes in the exchange value of the rupee led the Government of India to appoint a Committee to inquire into Indian currency and exchange and to provide, if possible, definite principles and lines of action for the future. The most important feature of the report of this Committee was that, for exchange purposes, the rupee should be fixed at 2*s.* gold, as opposed to 2*s.* sterling, and that British sovereigns and half-sovereigns should be legal tender at the rate of 1 sovereign to 10 rupees, instead of 1 to 15 as formerly. These and various subsidiary recommendations made were accepted and put into operation. But the high price of the rupee lasted only a short time. Owing to world conditions set up by the war, the market for Indian exports fell off very greatly, while at the same time India had a larger need of imports which she had not been able to obtain during the war period. The result was a material excess of imports over exports, and at the same time the price of silver fell greatly. Efforts were made to keep the rupee at the 2*s.* gold rate by suspension of council drawings and by sale in

large quantities of reverse councils, i.e. sales in India of drafts on London. This method, however, proved futile in view of the continued excess of imports. Consequently, after over £50,000,000 had been sold in reverse councils, their further sale was stopped, and exchange was allowed to find its own level. After some fluctuations it appears to be settling down again to its old level of 1*s.* 4*d.*

In conclusion, a short reference may be made to banking in India. Till lately there were three Presidency Banks, in Calcutta, Bombay and Madras, whose relations to the Government of India were somewhat analogous to those existing between the Home Government and the Bank of England, save that the banks had no right to issue notes. Recently the three banks have been amalgamated as the Imperial Bank of India, and accompanying this amalgamation the unified bank is required to open progressively a number of fresh branches which will enable it to become a much larger custodian of the Government balances.

Outside the Presidency Banks, a large amount of banking business is carried on in India by the great exchange banks, such as the National Bank of India, the Mercantile Bank of India, the Chartered Bank of India, Australia and China and others, whose headquarters are in London or elsewhere outside India. The total number of these banks operating in India was seventeen in 1921.

In addition there are twenty-seven Indian Joint Stock Banks with a paid-up capital and reserve of over Rs. 5 lakhs, whose head offices are located in India.

The total deposits in all classes of banks in India increased from 97 crores in 1912 to 228 crores in 1921, or by over 135 per cent. The respective shares in the total deposits are: Imperial Bank 32 per cent., Exchange banks 33 per cent. and Indian Joint Stock Banks 35 per cent.

C—MISCELLANEOUS

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